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**Constructing a history from fragments: jazz and voice in Boston, Massachusetts
circa 1919 to 1929**

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Abstract

Boston is a city steeped in history. Beyond the struggle for abolition, however, the historical experiences of the majority of black Bostonians, especially during the early twentieth-century, are lacking recognition. In this respect, the Jazz Age (represented here as circa 1919 – 1929) serves as a noteworthy case-in-point. For insofar as the impact of jazz music on social, political, and economic climates in cities such as New York, New Orleans, and even Kansas have been recorded, the music's impact on and significance in Boston is yet to be addressed in any great detail. Simply put, the history of jazz in Boston, and with it an important period for black development in the city, exists in fragments such as discographies, newspaper listings, musical handbooks, potted witness accounts among others. Therefore, the principle aim of this thesis is to piece-together these fragments to form a mosaic history that reveals instances of black struggle, resistance, and progress during a period of heightened racial (Jim Crow segregation), political (the Red Scare), and economic tension. Essential to this process is not only the need to locate the voices of Boston's black past, whether in text, testimony, sound and beyond, but also to create the conditions to hear them on their own terms. In order to achieve this, emphasis here is placed on tracing instances of voice, and as a by-product heritage, in musical form from the arrival of the first slaves to Boston in the first-half of the seventeenth century and analysing the ways in which these voices were perpetuated through methods of adaptation, appropriation, and evolution. This approach would ultimately assist in enriching the Jazz Age with a black art form that was not only unique but a distinct form of expression for a race lacking a significant voice in America at the time. In this respect, this thesis looks at the ways in which homegrown Boston musicians, such as Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney, and frequenting players, such as Duke Ellington, used jazz music as a way to oppose standard forms of white dominance, cultural elitism, and economic subjugation.

This thesis is dedicated to my partner and closest friend, Shreya...

*Sophisticated Lady*¹

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Constructing a history from fragments: jazz and voice in Boston, Massachusetts circa 1919 to 1929

Introduction

As a uniquely American musical synthesis and culture, jazz music has achieved pre-eminence throughout the world, most especially through the black American experience.¹ Today it is recognised as a national treasure, celebrated by ethnographers, historians, US presidents and more. However, jazz goes far beyond the boundaries of cultural significance. It is, in its own right, a complex and diverse national language; a language underpinned by music 'born of struggle but played in celebration'.² At its core is a vocabulary of principle elements that consists, amongst others things, of rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, and structural rudiments. But its performative improvisational quality dictates an expression of protest, rebellion, and freedom that renders the language transient; in other words, jazz is inevitably and constantly in a state of evolution.

Jazz developed and continues to do so within the cultural environment that surrounds it, but these environments are rarely fixed. From Saint Louis' Ragtime to New Orleans' Dixieland and all the way to New York boogie-woogie and beyond, jazz has been defined by the geographic locations in which musicians have cultivated distinctive musical styles. In doing so, these musicians have in turn contributed to the mythologies of certain cities and epochs. This dynamic is particularly relevant in the context of the Jazz Age (1919 – 1929). This is recognised as a time when musicians in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles and Kansas City fostered and appropriated ragtime, Dixieland, and jazz styles that had been developed by Buddy Bolden, Joe 'King' Oliver, Kid Ory and many more in New Orleans

¹ H.CON.RES 57: Passed by the 100th Congress of the United States of America. Introduced by the Honorable John Conyers Jr., Passed by the House of Representatives. September 23, 1987 Passed by the Senate December 4, 1987. Available: The Library of Congress: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d113:hconres57>. Accessed: June 1, 2013.

² William J. Clinton, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1993* (Louisiana: Best Books, 1994), 883.

between 1902 and 1918. These cities as such feature prominently in the context of Jazz Age narratives.

By contrast, Boston, Massachusetts is rarely mentioned in the chronicles of jazz history. The city is perhaps best known as a place where the music flourished in the post-Second World War-era haze of fading swing bands and rising bebop culture. Richard Vacca's 2012 work *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*,³ described as 'the first book to document the city's active jazz scene at mid-century' focuses on the years 1937 to 1962 and is a testament to this.⁴ Before this time, the history of jazz in Boston has been significantly underwritten. There is no work that addresses the music in the city during the twenties, while in addition the broader cultural context of the period is similarly untouched.

In many ways, Boston jazz exists as a rich history in fragments. These fragments consist of passing references and brief insights in general works, autobiographies, and media sources, yet when pieced together they form a mosaic that reveals a unique period in the city's history. Despite political uncertainty,⁵ heightened racial tensions,⁶ and social upheaval,⁷ jazz musicians often found Boston to be a particularly expedient springboard for national success: as a part of the compact New England touring circuit and due to its close proximity to New York, Boston was a productive training hub for aspiring players. In addition to producing unique home-grown talents, such as saxophonists Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges, and trumpeter, Max Kaminsky, the city also played a major role in the career development of jazz

³ R. Vacca., *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife 1937-1962* (Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2012).

⁴ BookDepository.co.uk, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles – Review*. Published: April 01, 2012. Available: <http://www.bookdepository.co.uk/Boston-Jazz-Chronicles-Richard-Vacca/9780983991007?b=3&t=-20#Fulldescription-20>. Accessed: June 14, 2013.

⁵ The democratic tide, spearheaded by the emergent Irish population of the city, was fast washing away the influence of the city's homogenised Yankee overlords, known as Brahmins.

⁶ Following the release of D.W Griffiths' controversial 1915 film, 'Birth of a Nation',⁶ which portrayed black men as savages possessed by animalistic lust, anti-black sentiments in the city increased against a backdrop of Jim Crowe. while Boston at this time boasted a strong past of anti-racist and abolitionist actions, in a general sense many of its white citizens did follow the national pattern of increased hostility towards blacks.

⁷ In the foreground of everyday society, protest, anarchism, murder, and disaster created a sense of disquiet amongst the population. In January 1919, a molasses flood killed 21 and injured 150;⁷ increased inflation and living costs generated the conditions for widespread worker strikes, with the most notable being the Boston Police Strike in September of the same year, which resulted in widespread looting, violence, and eight deaths.

pioneers and American icons such as Duke Ellington, Bix Beiderbecke, and Jean Goldkette. Legendary tenor saxophonist, Charles Walker remarked, 'If you talk to any old-time jazz musician, they recognize that Boston was a great jazz place.'⁸

The lack of consideration paid to Boston jazz during the period 1919-1929 is perhaps best understood in the context of a broader issue with the city's black history. For insofar as black heroes of Independence, abolition, and the Civil War such as social-reformer, orator, and writer, Frederick Douglas have been venerated and make up important aspects of the memorial landscape, the historical experiences of black Bostonians in the ensuing decades have received scant attention. As Lorraine E. Roses notes, 'neither scholarly tomes nor historical markers have addressed in depth the intriguing struggle of black Boston's development beyond the struggle for abolition'.⁹ This absence together with a lack of easily accessible primary source material, such as oral accounts, may be considered to reflect the national hardening of the colour line during the first half of the twentieth century. The halt to interracial progress was underpinned by the increased conduct of whites treating blacks with paternalism. During the twenties there is, consequently, a clear distance between the textbook term 'progressive era' and the real experience of black Americans, especially in Boston.

As a cultural and social construct, black jazz has become an essential part of the American master-narrative. Whether considered in terms of its artistic input or its resistance to subjugation, its history communicates a legacy of progress. Throughout its many years of maturation, the music has projected the need for social change, arguing a case for racial integration and mutual respect. For example, in Fats Waller's 1929 jazz standard '(What Did I Do to Be So) *Black and Blue*',¹⁰ Louis Armstrong sings:

'I'm white inside, but that don't help my case /
That's life; can't hide what is in my face.'

⁸ Drake Lucas, '(Boston) City in Transition, South End: Boston's Place in Jazz History'. Available: http://journalism.emerson.edu/changingboston/south_end/history.htm. Accessed: April 01, 2013.

⁹ Lorraine Elena Roses – BostonBlackHistory.org, Where's Black Boston? Available: <http://academics.wellesley.edu/AmerStudies/BostonBlackHistory/history/where.html>. Accessed: January 19, 2013.

¹⁰ Louis Armstrong, (What Did I Do to Be So) Black and Blue. © 1929 by Okeh, 8714. Vinyl.

‘How would it end; ain’t got a friend /
My only sin...is in my skin.’¹¹

Jazz is thus intrinsically linked to the construction of black identity. Importantly, this identity has at its core the first instances of an independent, autonomous black voice, which served as a potent protest against the widespread disenfranchisement, economic subjugation, and racial violence that impeded black progress in the first-half of the twentieth century. This voice in the context of Boston’s history during the early twentieth century is yet to be fully explored and as such remains largely unheard.

Through analysis of the broader cultural climate of the period, this dissertation seeks to construct a history of Boston jazz from 1919 to 1929. In doing so, emphasis is placed on the ways in which political and social dynamics both conditioned and inhibited the development of the music. As will be shown, in the midst of ongoing hierarchical power shifts in the city, cultural leaders, including those from the black community, often relegated jazz music to the periphery. It is my contention that this was primarily done in an effort to maintain esteem in the realms of classical and concert music, which those in authority considered superior in technique, education, and above all morality. In this respect, while opposition to jazz on a national scale was principally reduced to issues of race, in Boston, it will be argued that it was just as much about class. Unable to develop careers at home, enterprising black Boston musicians migrated to more culturally affluent cities across America. In doing so, they transformed Boston jazz from a local scene of limited substance into an essential component of the music’s national success.

Between 1900 and 1930, black Boston evolved into two subsections: the South End, northwest of South Boston, with its centre at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Columbus Avenue (or as it is also known, Crosstown), and the In-town, which comprised Lower Roxbury and the Outer South End.¹² As communities, these neighbourhoods

¹¹ Louis Armstrong, (What Did I Do to Be So) Black and Blue. © 1929 by Okeh, 8714. Vinyl.

¹² Violet M. Johnson, *The Other Black Bostonians: West Indians in Boston, 1900-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 37.

epitomised the black working classes of the time whilst also typifying the ethnic dynamic of the city. Boston was a melting pot of races, segregated into tight-knit ethnic and geographic enclaves. For example, following years of immigration from Europe, the Azores, Southern Italy, and Sicily, according to the 1930 census the North End of the city was at this time 99.9 percent Italian-born, or descended.¹³

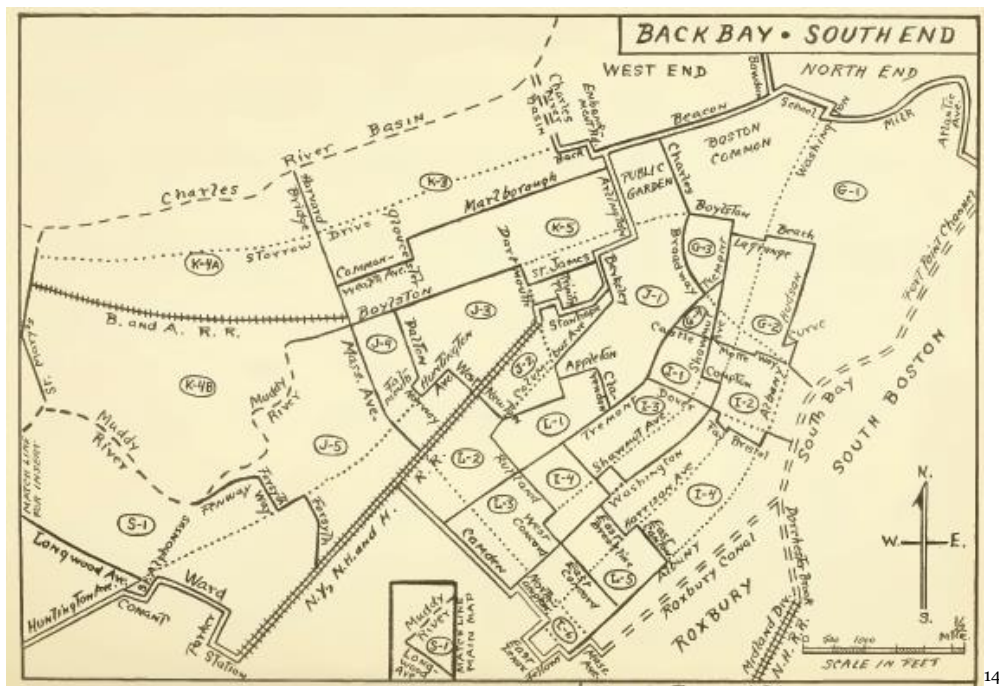


Figure 1.1: Boston South End: Washington Avenue and Roxbury

By 1920, the total black population of Boston comprised 16,350, 2.2 percent of the city's overall population.¹⁵ By contrast, the once similarly marginalised Irish population, the city's largest ethnic group, numbered 57,011.¹⁶ From 1870 to 1920, the percentage of black Boston residents, 1.4 percent in 1870 and 2.2 percent in 1920, was roughly on a par with New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland.¹⁷ This figure was significantly below the national average of 9.9 percent. While Boston was ranked the seventh most-populated city in America

¹³ Patrick L. Kennedy, *Boston Then & Now* (San Diego: Thunder Bay Press), 22.

¹⁴ Boston South End Map. Available:

<http://www.archboston.org/community/showthread.php?t=3606>. Accessed: June 4, 2014.

¹⁵ Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Volume III Population – Age for Cities and Towns of 10,000 or More 1920. Page 438.

¹⁶ Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Volume III Population – Country of Birth for the Foreign-Born White, for the State and Principal Cities 1920. Page 437. Note* as of 2014, Boston claims the most-concentrated Irish population for a city: 20.4 percent.

¹⁷ Robert C. Hayden, *African-Americans in Boston: More than Three-Hundred Fifty Years* (Boston: Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, 1992), 19.

in 1920 (748,060 residents) it was ranked twenty-seventh in black population.¹⁸ A quantitative comparison with New York, however, shows that the 2.7% of blacks in that city amounted to a figure of 152,467 residents, ten times the number in Boston.¹⁹

The bulk of Boston's black population (45%)²⁰ were geographically grouped in one location: the South End's Ward 13 (making up 28% of its population).²¹

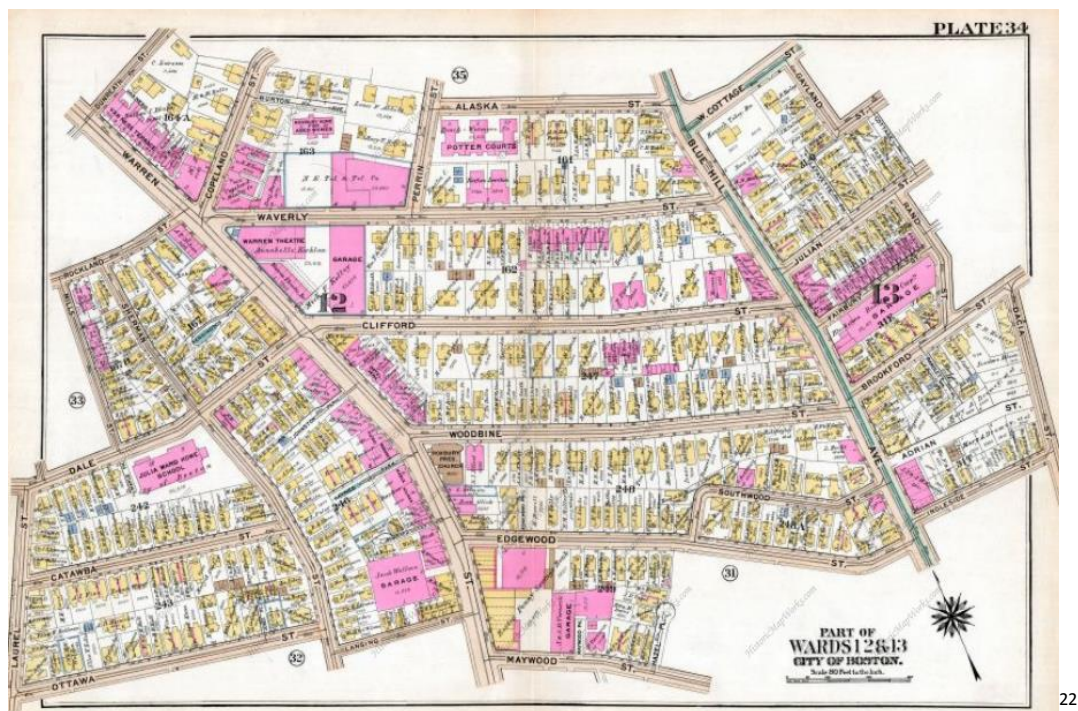


Figure 1.2: Map showing part of Wards 12 and 13 from 1931.

In communities such as this, blacks found themselves racially integrated with new immigrants to the city from Russia, China, Germany, and Southern Europe.²³ Left to their own devices, these communities struggled to generate the means to achieve social uplift, both within their ethnic social sets and collectively. In reality, they existed as an isolated, politically

¹⁸ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 4.

¹⁹ Cary D. Wintz, *Analysis and Assessment, 1940 – 1970* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 201.

²⁰ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 4-5.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Historic Map Works: Residential Genealogy, Part of Wards 12 & 13, City of Boston - Plate 034 Boston 1931 Roxbury published by G. W. Bromley & Co. in 1931. Available: <http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/7804/Plate+034/Boston+1931+Roxbury>. Accessed: September 4, 2014.

²³ Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Volume III Population – Country of Birth for the Foreign-Born White, for the State and Principal Cities 1920. Page 437.

marginalised, and vocationally inhibited underclass, consistently hampered by racial discrimination. Small in size and limited to menial labour work, these people posed no economic or political threat to the city's white residents.

Mark R. Schneider asserts that the smallness of Boston's black population during the early decades of the twentieth century somewhat insulated them from the types of racial violence experienced by blacks in other cities across America.²⁴ He adds that their marginalisation also encouraged community activism. This became prominent towards the close of the 1920s onwards as the community, through black organisations - Bookerites,²⁵ Trotterites,²⁶ and the NAACP²⁷ – developed links between Boston's abolitionist past and what would become the civil rights movement of the 1960s.²⁸ Conversely, however, when returning to actual numbers, in comparison to other northern American cities the black community in Boston was not as substantial in size and thus therefore struggled to generate political representation. Moreover, the community's smallness meant that it could not produce the levels of cultural production needed to rival leading jazz centres of the time, such as New York, New Orleans, and Philadelphia.

Despite its size, however, the black community of Boston did produce a consistent outpouring of cultural talent. In the churches, playgrounds, schools, and parades of its South End and Roxbury communities cultural black Boston developed. This was the Boston where

²⁴ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 6-7.

²⁵ Bookerites: Supporters of black educator, author, orator, and advisor to presidents of the United States, Booker T. Washington (April 5, 1856 – November 14, 1915). In response to the violence and turbulence experienced by blacks in the South during reconstruction, Washington advised blacks on matters such as self-help and attaining economic security, whilst encouraging blacks to allow political equality to happen over time.

²⁶ Trotterites: Supporters of William Monroe Trotter (April 7, 1872 – April 7, 1934), a black, Boston-based newspaper editor, real estate businessman, and activist for African-American civil rights. In 1901, Trotter founded the newsweekly, *The Boston Guardian*, and used its pages to call for civil rights and also to oppose Booker T. Washington's approach (gradual economical and social advancement) to racial equality. In response, Trotter advocated immediate political and intellectual empowerment.

²⁷ The 'National Association for the Advancement of Colored People' (NAACP) is an African-American civil rights organization in the United States, formed in 1909. Its mission is 'to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination' – NAACP: Welcome to the NAACP. Available: <http://www.naACP.org/about/mission>. Accessed: September 6, 2014.

²⁸ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 7-10.

artist Allan Crite and world-renowned tap dancer Jimmy Slyde were raised;²⁹ and it was the Boston into which educationist, culturist, and activist Ruth M. Batson was born.³⁰ More importantly, this Boston served as a training ground for brilliant black musicians. Beginning in 1910 and continuing well into the 1930s, on the stages of the Crosstown's ballrooms, nightclubs, and bars, black Boston jazz musicians, such as drummer and early jazz pioneer, George Latimer, developed nuanced playing styles and distinct musical voices that were on par with the finest in America.

Significantly, out of this community came three-fifths (Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges, and Paul Gonsalves) of arguably the finest jazz band of all-time: Duke Ellington's Orchestra. Duke's relationship with Boston, which is discussed in chapter six of this thesis, was instrumental in his development during the early years of his career. For four summers – 1924 to 1927 – Ellington held residencies in the area, which gave the band its first exposure outside of New York and resulted in its first out-of-town reviews.³¹ The addition of saxophonists Carney and Hodges also provided him with sidemen equipped to fulfil his musical ambitions. Not long after he acquired both, Ellington moved away from the limitations of three-minute compositions designed for 78-rpm records into longer, experimental pieces. Work such as 1931's *Creole Rhapsody* transformed him into the leading jazz vanguard of the time.³² Shortly thereafter in 1935, again in Boston, Duke Ellington became the first black musician to lead an orchestra.³³

²⁹ Daniel M. Scott III, *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance: A-J* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2004), 502.

³⁰ U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Route 128: Boston's road to segregation: a joint report - United States Commission on Civil Rights. Massachusetts Advisory Committee, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination* (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1975), ii.

³¹ A. D. Lawrence, *Duke Ellington and his World* (London: Routledge, 2004), 44-45.

³² "As composer Gunther Schuller describes it, the work is an ingenious exploration of tonal colors and new instrumental combinations. The length of the piece far exceeded the three minutes that 78 RPM records could hold on one side. In a 1962 interview, Duke recalled the negative reaction of the record company, saying, 'We just about got thrown off the label'." – NPR's 'Jazz Profiles', Duke Ellington: The Composer, Pt. 1. Published: November 19, 2008. Available: <http://www.npr.org/2008/11/19/97193567/duke-ellington-the-composer-pt-1>. Accessed: June 15, 2014.

³³ Tom Reney, Duke Ellington's Boston. New England Public Radio. Published: April 29, 2014. Available: <http://nepr.net/music/2014/04/29/duke-ellingtons-boston>. Accessed: June 01, 2014.

While New Orleans, Chicago, and New York, in particular Harlem, produced jazz that was distinct in terms of sound (such as nascent Harlem Jazz with its distinct rhythms and sonority) to the point of being geographically identifiable by ear, Boston did not ‘promote a unique style’, as noted by Thomas O’Connor.³⁴ Rather, as the styles of jazz changed (from early ragtime, French quadrille, and beguine-inspired forms to developing hard-swing, and bluesy, gypsy jazz) so too did Boston musicians, excelling at the new forms.³⁵ This versatility of Boston musicians often meant that they were readily equipped to acclimatise to the demands of performance in developing jazz cities such as New York, where uniquely pronounced styles were the backbone of scenes.

In addition, during 1915, black band-booker and leader, Harry ‘Bish’ Hicks, established the American Federation of Musicians (Local 535).³⁶ This was the top black musicians’ union in the country up until the 1970s, serving the interests of local and more significantly nationally-lauded jazz artists, such as Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Earl Hines, and Jimmie Lunceford.³⁷ In addition, booker Howard ‘Swan’ Johnson, following in the footsteps of Hicks, elevated some black Boston musicians to status in ‘society bands’ and thus on to the stages of the city’s finest hotels and venues in the mid-to late 1920s.³⁸ In providing such opportunities, aspiring black Bostonians often quickly appropriated this modicum of social uplift into a launch pad that transported them on to the grander stages of more culturally-affluent locations.

Navigating the cultural terrain of early twentieth-century Boston for blacks, however, was a difficult task. As Harlem, New York, evolved into a promising platform for black artistry and political expression, Boston became a place where culture was increasingly inhibited by its political sphere. Blacks had little influence in either respect, but power struggles between

³⁴ (Boston) City in Transition, South End, Boston’s Place in Jazz History by Drake Lucas. Available: http://journalism.emerson.edu/changingboston/south_end/history.htm. Accessed: April 01, 2013.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Malcolm Jarvis, *The Other Malcolm, "Shorty" Jarvis: His Memoir* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2001), vii.

³⁷ George A. Moonoogian, ‘Boston Bandstand: A Musical Odyssey’, *Whiskey, Women and...* No. 15, December 1985.

³⁸ Ibid.

the city's traditional Protestant upper-classes, known as Brahmins, and the once marginalised, emerging Irish-Catholic population downgraded them further. The Brahmins, with their New England exclusivity, close ties to Harvard University, and staunch Puritanism had for over a century dictated political, social, economic, and cultural interests in the city. But with the ascension of Irish immigrant, Hugh O'Brien to the position of city mayor in 1885, the Brahmin stranglehold on the city began to diminish.³⁹

Further Irish-Catholic mayoral victories in 1905, John F. Fitzgerald, and in particular 1913, James Michael Curley, exacerbated matters. Throughout his four terms as city mayor, Curley unapologetically favoured Irish-Catholics and repeatedly frustrated the Brahmin class by passing laws that allowed working classes, of which the Irish were an integral part, to get ahead.⁴⁰ By the time he retired from politics in 1950, having been elected to the House of Representatives and serving as Governor of Massachusetts, Irish Catholics were represented in every sector and on every level of industry.⁴¹ To make matters worse, in the realms of religion Brahmin dominance was also being challenged by new Protestant populations made up of immigrants. The religious sphere of the early twentieth century was quickly turned into a battlefield: shared Protestantism had the effect of causing friction rather than cohesion amongst different ethnic groups as they vied for power within the church.⁴²

To halt their diminishing power, the Brahmin class repeatedly turned to progressive and often controversial governmental reforms. These reforms focused on racist theories, which ushered in an era of anxiety and disillusionment. This era was very different from the city's bygone days of anti-racism and antebellum achievements. In 1894, three Boston

³⁹ Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted: The Early Boston Years, 1882–1890* (Maryland: JHU Press, 2013), 256.

⁴⁰ James J. Connolly, 'Reconstituting Ethnic Politics: Boston, 1909–1925', *Social Science History*, Vol. 19, No. 4. (Winter, 1995), pp. 482–3.

⁴¹ George Derby, James Terry White, *The National Cyclopædia of American Biography: Being the History of the United States as Illustrated in the Lives of the Founders, Builders, and Defenders of the Republic, and of the Men and Women who are Doing the Work and Moulding the Thought of the Present Time, Volume 57* (Originally from J. T. White; Digitised by the University of Michigan, 2010), 245. Available: https://archive.org/stream/cu31924020334821/cu31924020334821_djvu.txt. Accessed: July 10, 2014.

⁴² Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2014), Chapter 5.

Brahmin students of Harvard founded the Immigration Restriction League (IRL) with a view to re-establishing a semblance of authority.⁴³ In support, Henry Cabot Lodge, at the time a well-regarded Brahmin and (city) congressman remarked that the immigration of people of alien or lower races, of less social efficiency and less moral force not only served as a threat to the decline of a great race but also of human civilization itself.⁴⁴

Restrictive social policies on alcohol, prostitution, and gambling, that continued the legacy of Boston's Puritan forefathers,⁴⁵ would dominate the early twentieth century in Boston. First put into effect from 1823-1829 by then Mayor Josiah Quincy under the banner of temperance,⁴⁶ public officials were tasked with transforming Boston into a beautiful city and were informed that it was their duty to rid it of drunkenness and uncouth behaviours.⁴⁷ Raids on brothels, the filing of liquor-law violations, and the enforced closure of gambling dens soon followed. This stance was maintained by subsequent Mayors, including Quincy's son, Josiah Quincy, Jr., and was later adopted and appropriated by the Brahmin class. In short, these policies would, in the second-half of the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, inspire the Brahmin standpoint on defined social-ills.

As their hold on power in Boston slipped toward the close of the nineteenth century, the Brahmins came to view city taverns and bars as places of strong Irish unity.⁴⁸ These were the arenas in which the initial challenges to Brahmin control over civic and political life were being voiced. While the puritans were not entirely against alcohol, merely drunkenness, Brahmin influence saw to it that it became synonymous with immigration, vice, crime, and was viewed as a conduit of corrupt Irish politics. This was the precursor to prohibition - a ban

⁴³ Leonard C. Schlup, James Gilbert Ryan. Ed., *Historical Dictionary of the Gilded Age* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 214.

⁴⁴ Herman L. Crow, William L. Turnbull, *American History: A Problems Approach, Volume 2* (Boston: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 49.

⁴⁵ The term 'Puritan' was created to describe the extremist tendencies of people in the New World who thought the Elizabethan Settlement fostered an impure, compromised Protestantism. Puritan leaders, such as Boston settler, John Winthrop (January 12, 1588 – March 26, 1649) were often highly educated and believed strongly in rational religion.

⁴⁶ Theodore N. Ferdinand, *Boston's Lower Criminal Courts, 1814-1850* (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 25.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 25-27.

⁴⁸ American Temperance Union, *Journal of the American Temperance Union : and the New-York Prohibitionist, Volumes 26-29* (1862), 151.

on the manufacture, storage, transportation, and sale of alcohol (1920-1933) - which they embraced wholeheartedly.⁴⁹ As Thomas O' Connor asserts, it was but 'one more way of reducing the disastrous impact of foreign immigration on western institutions'.⁵⁰

In addition to temperance ordinances, (Brahmin) Blue Laws, which restricted licensing hours for city bars and taverns, were a product of mid nineteenth-century Brahmin legislation that had a direct impact on cultural proliferation in the city, especially during the Jazz Age.⁵¹ Vibrant and exciting jazz centres such as New Orleans and New York in the early twentieth century were awash with neighbourhoods full of bustling streets and bars. As the bars of Boston were subject to early-closing, the city became an unattractive proposition for performers. Longer trading hours meant greater income, which translated in turn into an ability to finance entertainments. Stage time in the city was often, as such, in short supply. The legacy of Brahmin blue laws is still felt today, with many Beacon Hill bars unable to operate beyond the hours of 1 am. In 2004, Michael Sletcher of *The Boston Globe* remarked that even now world-class musicians are still playing local pubs for as little as \$30 a night.⁵²

Along with the war against social-ills, The Watch and Ward Society, founded in 1878 as the New England Society for the Suppression of Vice and underpinned by Brahmin influence, also placed stringent sanctions on literature and theatre.⁵³ The Society's influence in Boston was so great that the city's Public Library kept books that had been deemed objectionable, such as Walt Whitman's 1882 work *Leaves of Grass*,⁵⁴ in a locked room.⁵⁵ Furthermore, publishers and booksellers held back publications for fear of the organisation's

⁴⁹ Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 368.

⁵⁰ Thomas H O'Connor, *The Boston Irish: A Political History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), 157.

⁵¹ Margaret Lamberts Bendroth Executive Director American Congregational Association, *Fundamentalists in the City: Conflict and Division in Boston's Churches, 1885-1950: Conflict and Division in Boston's Churches, 1885-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 49.

⁵² Michael Sletcher, 'Blue Laws and Boston Brahmins', *The Boston Globe*. Published: June 4, 2004.,13.

⁵³ Harvard Law School Library, Harvard University. Harvard Depository. Call Number: HOLLIS 601672. New England Watch and Ward Society: Records, 1918-1957. Subseries E: Membership Information, Box 12; Filed under Subscribers, Lists, and Miscellaneous - various correspondence from the members of NEWWS, including dues information and solicitation letters.

⁵⁴ Walt Whitman, *The Leaves of Grass. The Original 1855 Edition* (Massachusetts: Courier Corporation, 2012).

⁵⁵ New England Historical Society, 'Banned in Boston No Longer: The Man Who Stood Up to the Censors'. Available: <http://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/banned-boston-longer-man-stood-censors>. Accessed: July 23, 2014.

influence with prosecutors and judges, while plays were often performed in a censored 'Boston Version', with instances of alcoholism, sex, and violence omitted.⁵⁶ Between 1919 and 1929, the Society banned seventeen literary titles, including works by Aldous Huxley,⁵⁷ Ernest Hemmingway,⁵⁸ and D. H. Lawrence.⁵⁹ While the society's restrictions did not directly affect music, their influence nurtured an unhealthy cultural environment. Conversely, in New York, literary works, such as F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, were being interwoven into the fabric of the developing Jazz Age.⁶⁰

In a general respect, the Boston Brahmins maintained superiority in the arena of culture during the early decades of the twentieth century. For example, by 1910 they had established, with great success, a classical – and somewhat Eurocentric – canon of legitimate high-culture in the city, with great focus on concert and symphony music such as chorale music, oratorios,⁶¹ and operatic airs.⁶² As patrons of the arts and wealthy philanthropists centrally located, both literally and figuratively to Boston's power structure, they had endowed the city in the second half of the nineteenth century with theatres, concert halls, and museums, including The Athenaeum, Boston Symphony Hall, the Museum of Fine Art, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.⁶³ These institutions, which rivalled some of the finest in Europe, gave Boston a certain cultural distinction.

Sociologist Paul DiMaggio, in his work on cultural entrepreneurship in America suggests that the demarcation between high culture (such as classical music and fine art) and popular culture was non-existent until the late nineteenth century.⁶⁴ He places the

⁵⁶ New England Historical Society, 'Banned in Boston No Longer: The Man Who Stood Up to the Censors'. Available: <http://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/banned-boston-longer-man-stood-censors>. Accessed: July 23, 2014.

⁵⁷ Aldous Huxley, *Antic Hay* (Toronto: Harper/Collins, Canada, 2014).

⁵⁸ Ernest Hemmingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002).

⁵⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 2006).

⁶⁰ F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Maryland: Wildside Press, LLC, 2006).

⁶¹ Derek Vaillant, *Sounds of Reform: Progressivism and Music in Chicago, 1873-1935* (North Carolina: UNC Press Books, 2003), 14-15.

⁶² Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35, 2007. 368 – 387.

⁶³ *American Heritage: New Pictorial Encyclopedic Guide to the United States Volume 1 of American Heritage New Pictorial Encyclopedic Guide to the United States* (New York City: Dell Publishing Company, 1968), 538.

⁶⁴ Paul DiMaggio, 'Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America', *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982. 33-50.

development of high culture between the years 1870 and 1900, and argues that the development of a privileged sphere of cultural production was a result of the deliberate and calculated efforts of the elite Anglo-American class, in particular, the Boston Brahmins.⁶⁵ Using commercial wealth, much of which had been accrued through trade, the Brahmins pursued three interrelated projects. One: classification - distinguishing high culture from mass culture; two: cultural entrepreneurship - the establishment of cultural institutions over which elites monopolised control; and three - framing, the introduction of new social norms which regulated the consumption of art.⁶⁶

In order to institutionalise their aesthetic tastes and preferences, Boston Brahmins employed, as DiMaggio terms it, a 'high-culture model'.⁶⁷ This model is most prominently identifiable in the governing structure of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) of the time.⁶⁸ In both cases, these private organisations were founded and governed by Brahmins in possession of great wealth and elite status, such as the Cabots⁶⁹ and the Lowells.⁷⁰ These influential and wealthy individuals were holders of elite educational credentials and/or artistic accomplishments.⁷¹ The Orchestra and Museum were both established on a corporate model and relied upon charitable support from interested wealthy parties.⁷² Such organisational tactics essentially insulated the MFA and the BSO from (government-led) commercial interests and established these institutions as symbols of cultural elitism.

⁶⁵ A. P. Dobson., *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

⁶⁶ P. DiMaggio., *Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century. Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America* (London: Academic Press, 1982). 33-50.

⁶⁷ A. P. Dobson., *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 40.

⁶⁸ Jeremy Tanner, *Sociology of Art: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2004), 168.

⁶⁹ The Cabot family: a prominent Brahmin family in America since the arrival in 1700 of John Cabot at Salem, Massachusetts. The Cabot family has enjoyed a long tradition of wealth, philanthropy, and talent

⁷⁰ The Lowell family is one of the Boston Brahmin families of New England, known for both intellectual and commercial achievements. They originally settled on the North Shore at Cape Ann after they arrived in Boston on June 23, 1639.

⁷¹ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35 (2007), 368 – 387.

⁷² Ibid.

It was in this way that Boston's white elite was able to transform the relatively undifferentiated cultural fields of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries into an aesthetic hierarchy of distinction from which the working class and poor were essentially excluded.⁷³ Moreover, the distinction of these institutions and their artistic interests purposefully excluded non-elites, especially minorities from the black social set of the city. This created a clear divide between white-dominated forms of expression considered to be high-culture, such as classical music, and black-dominated forms of expression, such as blues and jazz, which were amongst many things considered low-class, uncouth, and the 'Devil's music'.⁷⁴ In this way, high culture came to stand at the top of a pyramid of cultural types because it was deemed by the Brahmins to be morally pure and edifying.⁷⁵

Within black communities, upwardly mobile residents seeking their own advancement in the arts via a process of cultural entrepreneurship ironically appropriated the Brahmin model. Studies of black communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries acknowledge the existence of class differences. For example, in his 1899 study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois noted the presence of what he defined as a small upper class of blacks, which included caterers, government clerks, teachers, professionals, and small merchants.⁷⁶ Du Bois noted that many of these individuals had significant wealth, elite education, political influence, and connections.⁷⁷

Adelaide Cromwell, in her work *The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class, 1750-1950* notes similar professional trends in Boston, adding that the black upper class on average, around 2% of the black population in Boston, belonged to an upper crust that was usually college-educated, attended churches, and included community leaders.⁷⁸ This

⁷³ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35 (2007), 368 – 387.

⁷⁴ Culture Shock, *The Devil's Music: 1920s Jazz - Season 1, Episode 4*. DVD. María Agui Carter, Calvin A. Lindsay Jr. Boston, WGBH. 2000.

⁷⁵ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992). 2.

⁷⁶ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). 124-5.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Adelaide M. Cromwell, *The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class, 1750-1950* (University of Arkansas Press, 1994).

collective had, according to William B. Gatewood, a reputation for exclusiveness that went 'even beyond those in Washington or Philadelphia'.⁷⁹ Wealthy men, such as the merchant, John H. Lewis and the baker, Joseph Lee promoted old-line black families of less means like the Ruffins, Riddleys, Duprees and Haydens. This group established a genteel way of life, complete with white servants, musical training for their children, and membership into exclusive clubs that were modelled on those of their white counterparts.⁸⁰

This group's wealth was, of course, not as great as its white counterparts was, and status stemmed primarily from occupation, education, and family background. Culturally, however, their aim was much like the Brahmins to advocate and promote a brand of high culture stewardship, albeit within a context of rigid racial boundaries during an era of widespread discrimination.⁸¹ By opting to promote and present culture that was socially acceptable to the powerful and wealthy whites of the city, these upwardly-mobile blacks projected an outward indifference toward mass and popular culture. In contrast, elsewhere elite blacks such as the Creoles in New Orleans were in inter-racial alliances with leading whites, spearheading that city's jazz movement.⁸²

The black elites of Boston were not, however, nearly as financially advantaged, socially connected, or influential as their Brahmin counterparts. As such, they were much more constrained in their ability to redefine the cultural field. Whereas the Brahmins successfully institutionalised their aesthetic sensibilities, black elites were limited in terms of both cultural status and the material resources they had at their disposal. Whereas white elites were able to convert economic wealth and social standing into durable cultural institutions (the Museum of Fine Art, Symphony Hall, and so on), non-dominant black elites in the city were much more likely to bring about change through coalition building and, more infrequently, strategic

⁷⁹ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 4-5.

⁸⁰ Ronald E Hall, 'Biracial Americans: The Advantages of White Blood' in Ronald E. Hall, *An Historical Analysis of Skin Color Discrimination in America Victimism Among Victim Group Populations* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2010), 109-114.

⁸¹ P. DiMaggio., *Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century. Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America* (London: Academic Press, 1982). 33-50.

⁸² Charles B. Hersch, *Subversive Sounds: Race and the Birth of Jazz in New Orleans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 64.

partnerships with dominant Brahmins. Like the city's Anglo-American upper-class, these black elites selectively contributed to the high arts in an effort to promote an aesthetic hierarchy of distinction from which the working class and poor, especially black jazz musicians during the progressive era, were essentially excluded.

In 1884, long before the furore of jazz took hold of America, John S. Dwight, virtuoso in music, and an enthusiastic student of the arts declared Boston supreme as an art, literary, and musical centre.⁸³ Forty years later, as jazz music was fast turning New York, New Orleans, and Philadelphia into cultural hotspots, the newly-appointed director of the Boston Symphony, Serge Koussevitzky, a Russian-born conductor, composer, and double-bassist, echoed Dwight's sentiment by stating that Boston would again be America's centre of music.⁸⁴ At the same time, he declared jazz to be a passing thing, remarking, 'I do not think it will endure – it is like a fashion. One year you have a new hat, the next year you discard it for another style'.⁸⁵

In a general sense, Boston struggled beyond the demarcation of concert and classical music. Its leading Brahmin figures viewed these musical forms as untainted, edifying, and artistically superior to all others. While the city had enough wealth and resources to make a telling cultural impact, such resources did not stretch to the popular music of the time, namely jazz, which was considered uncivilised and immoral. As such, Boston did not develop the infrastructure of record companies, managers, booking agents, and media coverage required to be an eclectic music centre like New York. Through the commitment of blacks such as band booker and leader, Harry 'Bish' Hicks, Boston maintained a jazz scene but it could not grow one. Nevertheless, this scene produced important jazz musicians and in conjunction supported and developed the careers of many national icons.

⁸³ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 23.

⁸⁴ Author Unknown, 'Boston to be Center of Modern Music', *The Boston Globe*. Published: September 3, 1924. Page 1.

⁸⁵ Serge Koussevitzky in Author Unknown, 'Boston to be Center of Modern Music', *The Boston Globe*. Published: September 3, 1924. Page 2.

The aim of this dissertation is to construct and understand Boston jazz in the broader context of the city's history between 1919 and 1929. In doing so, the chapters that follow will explore the dynamic between race and class in Boston within the frameworks of culture (in particular, music), social development and politics during this period. At its core will be a focus on black jazz musicians, both homegrown and with a connection to the city, and the ways in which these individuals, against a backdrop of strict racial limitations, transformed their abilities into a form of cultural capital; i.e., the means with which to achieve a modicum of social uplift. In the words of Pierre Bourdieu:

Capital is accumulated (In its materialised form or its “incorporated,” embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor.⁸⁶

In this sense, accomplished musicianship presented some Bostonians with the first real opportunity as blacks to advance beyond the restrictions of their small and marginalised communities. In turn, their abilities also served as the means to combat the limitations placed upon them by a culturally-oppressive Brahmin hierarchy. Where possible, Boston produced and nurtured musicians who contributed to the development of a national cultural phenomenon in the form of jazz - an art form that gave blacks the first opportunity to nurture a unique voice of cultural relevance and political significance.

The developing popularity of jazz on a national scale meant that blacks had for the first time a widespread audience that was willing, whether in support or opposition of the music, to listen and thus engage them in a unique form of discourse. In this respect, as literary theorist and philosopher, Gayatri Spivak notes, ‘Anyone can talk; it is merely the act of producing a stream of syllables in a stream of noise. But speaking is dialogic – in that it requires not only that someone listen but someone reply, too’.⁸⁷ Thus jazz music whilst primarily a source of entertainment was simultaneously used by enterprising blacks, such as Duke Ellington, as a mouthpiece for the advancement of the race. Aided by Boston musicians, Harry Carney and

⁸⁶ Pierre Bourdieu in David L. Swartz, Vera L. Zolberg, *After Bourdieu* (London: Springer Science & Business Media, 2005), 240.

⁸⁷ D. P. Huddart, *Postcolonial theory and autobiography*, (London: Routledge, 2008), 146-7.

Johnny Hodges, Ellington drew on the popularity of jazz during the latter years of the 1920s and transformed the music into a portal through which the black voice was transported from the margins into the mainstream.

This thesis spans six chapters which trace the social, cultural, and economic developments of blacks in Boston, from their early colonial settlements through to their position of insularity in the South End of the city during the Jazz Age. While at its core, this thesis presents a history of Boston jazz music (the players, booking agents and venues integral to the development of the art form in the city) circa 1919 – 1929, this dissertation also brings to the fore instances of the ‘history-less’. The latter are presented here as anonymous black Bostonians of the time, who in their work, artistry, and daily lives contributed to the development of a nuanced black cultural sphere. This sphere, which has received only limited recognition to date, ultimately assisted in creating the conditions for some jazz musicians, in particular Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges, to succeed nationally.

What follows is first a theoretical approach to dealing with the construction of a history from source fragments. This approach draws on and melds together aspects of musicology, history from below and new cultural history. In doing so, the aim is to use an array of materials - from songs, biographies, literary texts, images and more - to reveal instances of Bostonian voice, identity, and agency. Thereafter, notably in chapter three, focus shifts to an analysis of the racial climate of early twentieth-century Boston, with particular emphasis on the ways in which the Red Scare, the promotion of fear of a potential rise of communism or radical leftism circa 1919, reinforced notions of prejudice towards and the oppression of black Bostonians.

Chapter four, five, and six collectively hone in on the importance of music in Boston as a means of perpetuating cultural identity and as a mode of protest, especially for blacks, as well as a portal for the establishment and upholding of class distinction for whites. For example, in chapter four emphasis is placed on the significance of propagating black heritage (and as a by-product the black voice) through the generational transference of African rhythms, call-and-response vocalisations, slave songs and more from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. Thereafter, an analysis of the rise of Brahmin-led cultural

elitism in Boston and the ascension of classical music to a position of high-art follows. As the leading cultural form in the city, classical music in the first instance served to satisfy the taste sensibilities of the genteel elite, but it also existed, as previously noted, as a barometer for the differentiation of what was perceived to be good and bad culture.

Chapters five and six take a more narrative and at times anecdotal approach to constructing the past, with particular emphasis on personal struggles and achievements, as well as key events: including the murder of James Reece Europe and the Pickwick Club disaster. These histories are underpinned by the contextualisation established in chapters two, three, and four, and show that despite the outward indifference of Boston's elites to mass and popular music, limited resources, and growing racial tension, blacks in Boston cultivated a jazz scene that was fundamental in the national development of the music between 1919 and 1929. While the city paled in comparison to New York, New Orleans, and Chicago in terms of numbers, venues, and appeal, black Bostonians, through a strong sense of community, cultural entrepreneurship, and a desire for uplift perpetuated a small scene. This scene, irrespective of size, influenced, nurtured, and produced proficient players who projected compelling black voices, including, as will be shown in chapter six, Duke Ellington.

Chapter two: Historiography, approaches to fragmented sources, and methodologies

1. Introduction

Constructing a history of Boston jazz from 1919 to 1929 is, in the simplest of terms, a challenging prospect. Almost a century on from the start of the Jazz Age, many of the great musicians who the city produced during this cultural ‘golden age’ have all but been forgotten, while others have received no recognition at all. The lack of attention paid to such figures has furthermore limited the consideration of jazz music’s impact in the context of racial, social, and political developments in the city, and in turn the significance of Boston jazz on the national scale. One of the issues with memorialising Boston jazz is that unlike neighbouring New York, which has ingrained the music into the makeup of its identity through a ‘National Jazz Museum’,⁸⁸ a Duke Ellington sculpture,⁸⁹ and an ever-expanding archive of research, Boston is yet to invest in tangible markers and the intellectual input required to bring its Jazz Age musicians and their importance into the present.

For Boston jazz enthusiasts, current nods to the music’s past in the city are the vague and obscure remnants of what once was. For example, protruding along a stretch of the Charles River in neighbouring Waltham, Massachusetts, are the pilings upon which legendary jazz venue ‘The Nuttings on the Charles’ once stood. Built in 1914 by C.P. Nutting, the Nuttings was one of the few ballrooms in Massachusetts where Boston musicians and the famous travelling big bands of the time performed with regularity. It burned to the ground in 1961 having hosted jazz icons such as Max Kaminsky, Bix Beiderbecke, Duke Ellington and many more.⁹⁰ The worn and weather-beaten concrete today serves as a kind of makeshift monument – a tangible marker - to a history all but forgotten.

⁸⁸ National Jazz Museum in Harlem (Official Website). Established: 2013. Available: <http://jazzmuseuminharlem.org>. Accessed: May 1, 2015.

⁸⁹ Official Website of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, ‘Central Park: Duke Ellington Statue’. Available online: <http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/central-park/highlights/19687>. Accessed: May 1, 2015.

⁹⁰ Jean Pierre Lion, *Bix: The Definitive Biography of a Jazz Legend: Leon "Bix" Beiderbecke 1903-1931* (Edinburgh: A&C Black, 2005), 122.



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Figure 2.1: The remnants of what once was the ‘Nuttings-on-the-Charles’, a popular jazz-era dance hall and ballroom

There is no museum to Boston jazz, no statues, and little written work. Rather, the closest thing to an official acknowledgement of a jazz past in the city is a solitary painted mural, entitled ‘Honor Roll’.⁹² Financed by the Boston Arts Commission and produced by local artist, Jameel Parker in 1999, the work is displayed on the lower fascia of what once was the city’s famous Hi-Hat jazz Club on the corner of Massachusetts and Columbus Avenues in the city’s South End.⁹³ It pays homage to a handful of jazz icons active in the city during the first half of the twentieth century, notably homegrown talents, Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges. While work of this nature can of course articulate the identity of a particular place and impose it upon a community, there is something less fixed, however, and somewhat more temporary about a painted homage than the stable, static substances – brick and bronze – that make up reverences to jazz in New York.

In a metaphorical sense, these two examples conjure a certain symbolism that speaks to the pressing issue of constructing Boston’s jazz past. In one respect, the protruding concrete remains of the ‘Nuttings on the Charles’ are evocative of the partially obscured history of Boston jazz that exists beneath the surface of more considered narratives. But this history is, like the painted impermanence of Parker’s ‘Honor Roll’, susceptible to deterioration and in time certain to fade and flake away, thus distorting its overall impact. In fact, portions of

⁹¹ Doug Cornelius.com, Tag Archives: Charles River Canoe & Kayak. Published: October 17, 2010. Available: <http://dougcornelius.com/tag/charles-river-canoe-kayak>. Accessed: September 10, 2014.

⁹² Boston Art Commission, since 1890. Jameel Parker, Honor Roll, 1999. Available: <http://www.publicartboston.com/content/honor-roll-mural>. Accessed: May 1, 2015.

⁹³ Jameel Parker, ‘Projects’. Available: <http://jameelparker.com/biography.htm>. Accessed: May1, 2015.

Boston's jazz history have already dulled, and more alarmingly some of the links – booking records, musical society handbooks, several newspaper archives (including the Boston American 1904 – 1961) and more – have been completely lost, thus resulting in a level of fragmentation that can distort.⁹⁴

There is thus a pressing need to transform the remaining fragments of this past into a history. With this in mind, the overall aim of this chapter is to present a methodological approach to constructing a history of Boston jazz in the period 1919-1929 from fragments. This approach purposefully appropriates ideas gleaned from the school of subaltern studies and the discipline of musicology and amalgamates them to form a workable framework in which to undertake this task. In this respect, emphasis is firstly placed on the nature of the fragmented materials available and the benefits and problems they pose. Portions of these materials relate to broad instances of socio-cultural and political developments in the city, while a primary focus is placed on more direct references to jazz music itself, such as sound recordings, musical notation, and oral testimony.

Thereafter, attention is switched to the history of subaltern studies, and the ways in which the school of thought has, since its conception in the 1970s, been developed and reconceptualised.⁹⁵ From a rigid means of locating unheard voices in Indian and Asian history, subaltern studies has through a process of diversification been transformed primarily by western scholars and cultural commentators, such as American historian, David Ludden,⁹⁶ into a multifarious and ever-evolving methodological approach. The diversification of subaltern studies underpins the basis for the third aspect of this chapter, which deals with the application of an appropriated concept of methodology into what is referred to here as, 'Can the Subaltern Play?' This concept builds on, and in some respects appropriates, the work of

⁹⁴ Douglas Crawford McMurtrie, *The Beginnings of the American Newspaper* (Alberta: Black Cat Press, 1935), 27.

⁹⁵ In the 'Preface' to the first volume of Subaltern Studies, Ranjit Guha explained that the term 'subaltern' would be used by the authors in the series as a 'general attribute of subordination in South Asian society'. He argued that the subaltern condition could be based on caste, age, gender, office, or any other way, including, but not limited to class. Ranajit Guha, *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press USA, 1988), 35.

⁹⁶ David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia* (London: Anthem Press, 2002).

Gayatri Spivak's 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'⁹⁷ and Rebecca Romanow's 'Can the Subaltern Sing?'⁹⁸ to transform jazz composition and its many expressions into modes of dialogue, in other words, a metaphorical language. In doing so, this process will assist in locating a black Boston voice in music produced by the city's jazz players between 1919 and 1929.

2. Historiography: sources, fragments, and absence

In the foreword to Robert C. Hayden's 1991 study *African-Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years*,⁹⁹ media and political strategist, Joyce Ferriabough wrote:

This book was born out of sheer frustration and an urgent necessity. There needed to be a lasting record that chronicled the important contributions of African-Americans in Boston in order to educate our young people of all races and, in particular, to inspire future generations of African-Americans.¹⁰⁰

Prior to this work, 'there was not a single publication that even attempted to chronicle this illustrious history'.¹⁰¹ Hayden used his introduction to present the aim of the work and more importantly his hope in its influence. The aim was rather straightforward: to acknowledge some of the many significant and largely unacknowledged black Bostonians in the city's history, while his hope that the work would 'spur additional research' was a rallying call to fellow scholars to build upon his foundations and continue to catalogue and narrate Boston's black past.¹⁰² As he remarked, 'For the story to be complete, you and others must be involved'.¹⁰³

However, in the twenty-four years that have followed since the release of Hayden's work, the kind of outpouring that he might have anticipated has not occurred. As Lorraine E.

⁹⁷ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Rosalind C Morris, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010).

⁹⁸ Rebecca Romanow, 'But... Can the Subaltern Sing?', *Comparative Culture and Literature*. Volume 7. Issue 2, 2005. 2-11.

⁹⁹ Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston: Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991).

¹⁰⁰ Joyce Ferriabough in Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston: Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991), 9.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston, Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991), 11.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 13.

Roses in the introductory notes for her 2006 project ‘Where’s Black Boston?’ remarks, the city’s ‘official histories and popular accounts of black participation remain focused on Abolitionism, while black life during the ensuing decades remains oddly invisible’.¹⁰⁴ This is despite a strong lineage of black figures in the city’s early twentieth-century history. Amongst many others, names such as Melnea Cass,¹⁰⁵ Maria Baldwin,¹⁰⁶ Alan Rohan Crite,¹⁰⁷ and Malcolm X¹⁰⁸ have a particular resonance in Boston. The city was an integral player in the character development of these figures and thus contributed to the shaping of their national recognition identities.

What has come to fruition in the wake of Hayden’s study is by all accounts an accomplished yet altogether small body of research. Insightful studies such as, Adelaide Cromwell’s, *The Other Brahmins*;¹⁰⁹ Violet M. Johnson’s, *The Other Black Bostonians: West Indians in Boston, 1900-1950*;¹¹⁰ and Susan Traverso’s, *Welfare Politics in Boston, 1910-1940*¹¹¹ serve more as the relaying of Hayden’s foundations rather than building blocks of a developing history. On a positive note, however, these studies incorporate peripheral or marginal figures, communities, and events into the historical picture, and they present, in part,

¹⁰⁴ Loraine Elena Roses, Boston Black History.Org, ‘After Abolition: The New Century, Introduction’. Available:

http://academics.wellesley.edu/AmerStudies/BostonBlackHistory/history/intro_beyond.html. Accessed: June 18, 2014.

¹⁰⁵ Melnea Cass (1896-1978) fought vigorously and successfully for the improvement of services and resources for Boston’s black community for over 60 years.

¹⁰⁶ Maria L. Baldwin was the first black citizen of Massachusetts to be appointed school principle. She was appointed head of the Agassiz School in Cambridge, MA. in 1899, and served 23 years.

¹⁰⁷ Alan Rohan Crite is regarded as Boston’s most distinguished Black artist and art historian. His work has been displayed all over America and Europe, and remains on permanent display in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, The Boston Public Library, and the Boston Athenaeum.

¹⁰⁸ It was in Boston that Malcolm Little (X) went from being a partying teenager who could not keep a job, to a street hustler who got busted and imprisoned as inmate number 22843. Behind the bars of Massachusetts prisons he educated and remade himself into a disciplined, religious man with the backbone to stand up for his people.

¹⁰⁹ Adelaide M. Cromwell, *The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class 1750-1950* (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1995).

¹¹⁰ Violet M. Johnson, *The Other Black Bostonians: West Indians in Boston, 1900-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

¹¹¹ Susan Traverso, *Welfare Politics in Boston, 1910-1940* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

a valuable insight into the lived experiences of ordinary, working class blacks during the period.¹¹²

There has in a general sense, however, been a tendency in work on early twentieth-century black Boston history to overlook the social conditions and roles of everyday citizens.¹¹³ To an extent, this is reflected in the fact that the wealth of research into Boston's blacks has sought to document the lives of its most esteemed.¹¹⁴ Adelaide Cromwell's pioneering work *The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class 1750-1950*,¹¹⁵ which focused on blacks in the city who exercised leadership from the end of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, is one of several examples.¹¹⁶ Studies in this vein have repeatedly explored the political, economic, and social roles that leading black figures, such as the Lew Family,¹¹⁷ and the League of Women for Community Service (LWCS),¹¹⁸ played in the contexts of the city's race and social caste systems.

In this respect, as William B. Gatewood asserts in his 1991 study, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920*¹¹⁹, interest in the Lews and other leading blacks (especially in Boston) is best understood within the dynamics of elite status. In short: the relationship between privileged blacks and whites rather than the dynamic between elite blacks and

¹¹² E. Muir, *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe: Volume 2 of Selections from Quaderni Storici; Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

¹¹³ Deborah Brandt, *Literacy in American Lives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹¹⁴ William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991).

¹¹⁵ Adelaide M. Cromwell, *The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class 1750-1950* (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1995).

¹¹⁶ Other works include William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991), and Jacqueline M. Moore, *Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and the Struggle for Racial Uplift* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

¹¹⁷ The Lew family were descendents of Brazilia Lew, 'a black Bostonian who had participated in the American Revolution'. The Lews were not necessarily wealthy, but their history entitled them to a place at the top of Boston's black social structure. Gatewood notes, 'by 1952, eight generation of Lews had been prominent in black civic and social life in the city'. - William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991), 111.

¹¹⁸ Established in Boston in 1918 by enterprising women Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Florida Ruffin Ridley, and Maria Louise Baldwin, this group emerged out of the social reformist spirit of the black women's club movement of the 'Women's Era', 1880-1920, and developed significant wealth, political influence, and connections in the city of Boston.

¹¹⁹ William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991), 113.

members of their respective race.¹²⁰ As Roses and Flemming assert, well-regarded blacks considered social uplift more likely through coalition building and strategic partnerships with dominant whites than through efforts to mobilise their own community.¹²¹ Therefore, work on these people consistently touches on the ways in which aspiring blacks adopted white tastes, practices, and sensibilities. The leading blacks of Boston attended gala performances at Symphony Hall and were regular attendees at Harvard public events.¹²² Moreover, they benefitted from better living conditions, lifestyle, and social standing – these are lives far removed from that of the ordinary black Bostonians during the period.¹²³

The most notable downside to the limited attention paid to the lives of ordinary blacks in the city during the early twentieth century is that a broad spectrum of individuals within an array of contexts remains largely without consideration.¹²⁴ In the spheres of science, technology, and medicine, as well as in law, education, sports, military service and more, many black Bostonians not only contributed to the city's development but also assisted in nurturing its unique identity. The lives of significant blacks such as Dr. William A. Hinton (1883-1959), who between 1915 and 1949 developed the famous Hinton Test for syphilis have been consistently relegated to underwritten encyclopaedia entries and passing references in textbooks.¹²⁵

In these forms, the lives of many black Bostonians are frequently lost within the myriad of broader and much more embellished national histories that deal with black advancement. This, in part, explains why black Bostonians from the first half of the twentieth century are repeatedly overlooked in discussions on race, culture, and politics for more widely celebrated

¹²⁰ William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991), 113.

¹²¹ Crystal M. Flemming and Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35, 2007. 368-387.

¹²² Crystal M. Flemming and Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35, 2007. 380.

¹²³ William B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: the Black Elite 1880-1920* (Arkansas, University of Arkansas Press, 1991), 113-14.

¹²⁴ Loraine Elena Roses, Boston Black History.Org, 'After Abolition: The New Century, Black Boston Writers. Available: <http://academics.wellesley.edu/AmerStudies/BostonBlackHistory/history/writers.html>. Accessed: June 18, 2014.

¹²⁵ Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston: Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991), 145.

figures. The consistent downgrading of the city's blacks to the periphery of historical dialogue has restricted the ways in which the community as a whole has been thus far viewed. Unless the histories of black Bostonians from the aforementioned period are developed into more detailed studies, the lines branching out from their lives, the communities in which they lived, and the events they experienced, which are evocative of broader issues, will remain on the margins until they are completely forgotten.¹²⁶

An exhaustive list of black Bostonians who assisted in fostering the city's cultural progress would if documented, without question, fill several encyclopaedic volumes. However, much like Dr. William A. Hinton, dancer, Mildred Davenport (1900 - 1990),¹²⁷ classical concert performer, Roland Hayes (1887 – 1977),¹²⁸ pioneering playwright, James Henderson (1894-1979)¹²⁹ and so many others are merely represented by what Joyce Ferriabough terms, 'bits and pieces'.¹³⁰ These fragments in the context of the period 1919 to 1929 offer little in the way of cohesion. Thus, one of the core aims here is developing the means with which to fit these fragments together, and in doing so tell a significant but untold past.

It is my contention that a distinctive black Bostonian voice during the period can be located in the jazz music produced by its musicians. In this sense, jazz is viewed not simply as a musical art form but also as the stimulus of social change, and in the present as a portal for historical narrative. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to connect with Boston jazz musicians and present them on their own terms as opposed to recasting them in counterpoise to the dominant culture of white Bostonians.¹³¹ In doing so, with much emphasis on the notion of locating voice, the core methodological principle of this work utilises an aspect of Gayatri

¹²⁶ C. C. Sugars, *Home-work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy, And Canadian Literature* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004), 408-412.

¹²⁷ Mildred Davenport, born 1900, became a trailblazing and renowned dance instructor. In 1938 she danced her interpretation of the African-American spirituals with the Boston Pops.

¹²⁸ Roland Hayes, who gained national and international fame as a classical concert artist, launched his career in Boston's Symphony Hall in 1917.

¹²⁹ James Henderson was a pioneering actor and developer of the Black theatre in Boston during the first half of the 20th century.

¹³⁰ Joyce Ferriabough in Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston, Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991), 9.

¹³¹ Jackson Lears in Lary May, *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). 55.

Chakravorty Spivak's concept of subalternity, which emphasises the need to create the space to allow the voiceless to be heard rather than speaking for them.¹³² This is achieved by analysing the multifaceted dynamics of Boston jazz music, drawing on its historical, social, and musicological (including aesthetic and sonal) qualities, within a purposefully fashioned methodological framework that allows for a nuanced means of orating struggle, protest, and advancement.

In a general sense, constructing a history of jazz in the early decades of the twentieth century, or simply tracing its lineage has many problems. Ear-witness accounts of early jazz bands that emerged at the turn of the century, like 'James Reese Europe and his 369th U.S. Infantry 'Hell Fighters' Band', vary widely.¹³³ Nothing that they played was written down and, according to Len Weinstock, even if it had been it would be of little value;¹³⁴ to the present day, no musical notation has yet been devised that accurately describes the feel of an improvised performance.¹³⁵ To compound this, as is noted in Paul F. Berliner's *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, early artists, in particular those who toured the vaudeville circuit, often refused to document and/or share their compositions because they were concerned about their material being overexposed, meaning large bodies of work have simply been lost to the past.¹³⁶

Dealing largely with names of performers and venues – clubs, hotels, theatres, restaurants, and ballrooms – it would take an almost encyclopaedic frame of reference to locate and verify persons and groups that relate specifically to blacks. Within the context of jazz development, this task is all the more difficult because group name changes were

¹³² G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 132.

¹³³ James Reese Europe., 'James Reese Europe featuring Noble Sissle' © 1996. Iajrc. B000003KWD. Compact Disc.

¹³⁴ Len Weinstock, 'The Origins of Jazz'. The Red Hot Jazz Archive. Available: <http://www.redhotjazz.com/originsarticle.html>. Accessed: January 11, 2015. Note: Len Weinstock is a revered critic and aficionado of jazz music.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ P. F. Berliner., *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). 820.

commonplace. One week a band was a 'hot five' the next a 'syncopated seven'. Thus, as black Boston jazz players, for example, Charles 'Skinny' Johnson¹³⁷ predominantly excelled as sidemen, tracing their career paths using the groups in which they played as a reference point is no easy proposition. Furthermore, musicians would regularly drop in and out of groups from week to week, swapping and changing roles in the process, while some groups simply came together for one performance and then disbanded.

Tracing the evolution of black jazz in its early years through the music itself is similarly difficult: few physical copies of original recordings remain, and what does exist is only a partial reflection on the music.¹³⁸ While race labels such as New York's Okeh Records made advances on the significant, little-tapped market for blues and jazz by black artists in the early 1920s, studio time was a rarity and thus an abundance of fringe performers and travelling bands never committed anything to record.¹³⁹ Conversely, the issue of absence has meant that segments of the history of jazz's formative years have been written through a portico of conjecture and assumption. The life of Buddy Bolden (1877-1931), the purported father of New Orleans' Jazz, is a notable case-in-point. Bolden left no recordings behind; rather he has been revered and memorialised through the recollections of musicians from the time.¹⁴⁰ Despite no audial or tangible reference to his work, he is nonetheless remembered for his loud, clear tone, and as one of the finest horn players of his era.¹⁴¹

While Boston had its own jazz and dance orientated Grey Gull Label, its record output was small and dominated by whites.¹⁴² By the mid-twenties, the label made tentative advances

¹³⁷ Charles 'Skinny' Johnson was a pianist/band leader in the Boston area beginning about 1910 and intermittently through the early 1940s.

¹³⁸ While the recording of what jazz artists began in 1917 with the New Orleans Dixieland Jazz Band, it was not until around 1921 that Kid Ory's group performed for the first black jazz recording. Daniel Hardie, *Exploring Early Jazz: The Origins and Evolution of the New Orleans Style* (New York: iUniverse, 2002), 142.

¹³⁹ Okeh was founded by Otto K. E. Heinemann when he set up his own recording studio and gramophone record pressing plant in New York City in 1916. Amongst Okeh's artists were Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Lonnie Johnson, Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang, Victoria Spivey, Clarence Williams, Miff Mole, Sophie Tucker, and Seger Ellis.

¹⁴⁰ Donald M. Marquis, *In Search of Buddy Bolden: First Man of Jazz* (Louisiana: LSU Press, 2005), XV.

¹⁴¹ British Broadcasting Corporation. 'Buddy Bolden', *The Listener*, Volume 89. Published: February 1, 1973. 160. Available: <http://gdc.gale.com/products/the-listener-historical-archive-1929-1991>. Accessed: June 10, 2013.

¹⁴² Frank Hoffman, *Encyclopaedia of Recorded Sound* (London: Routledge, 2005), 923.

into the national pool, releasing records by artists from an array of states. Through Grey Gull, some white Boston players, in particular Phil Napoleon, with the legendary Original Memphis Five,¹⁴³ Al Starita and his Society Orchestra,¹⁴⁴ and the aptly named Bostonian Syncopators,¹⁴⁵ repeatedly pitted their capabilities up against a host of rising national artists such as New York's, Nathan Glantz,¹⁴⁶ and especially Vincent Lopez.¹⁴⁷ When label did record black artists, they were rarely from Boston. For example, Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra, the most popular black jazz group of the era, travelled to Boston from New York in 1923 to record a rendition of Alberta Hunter and Lovie Austin's 'Down Hearted Blues'.¹⁴⁸

When one reflects on the history of Boston jazz, nearly every neighbourhood produced a musician significant enough to be mentioned in Leonard Feather's 'Encyclopaedia of Jazz', arguably the most comprehensive work on the art form to date.¹⁴⁹ From Serge Chaloff to Jerry Gray, and on to Ruby Braff, Feather's work illustrates the extent to which Boston produced excellent musicians. The problem, however, is that few of the entries relate to musicians active in Boston during the period 1919-1929. A particular oversight is Anglo-American violinist, bandleader, and graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music, Mal Hallett. While he features in entries for Roy Eldridge, Douglas Duke, Gene Krupa, and Massachusetts born multi-instrumentalist, Brad Gowans, he is not afforded his own place in the work. This is surprising, because in the second-half of the 1920s, Hallett's band was a major draw from Maine to New Jersey and from Boston to western Pennsylvania.¹⁵⁰ His appeal was so great that in 1928 he ranked as the region's top earner, amassing \$60,000 (equivalent to roughly \$820,000 today).¹⁵¹

¹⁴³ Original Memphis Five, *That Teasin' Squeezin' Man Of Mine*. Phonograph. Grey Gull. 1144-A. 1923.

¹⁴⁴ Al Starita Sociey Orchestra, *Wang Wang Blues*. Phonograph. Grey Gull. 1178=B. 1921.

¹⁴⁵ Bostonian Syncopators, *Apple Sauce*. Phonograph. Grey Gull. 1271=C. 1923.

¹⁴⁶ Golden Gate Orchestra (Glantz), *March of the Siamese*. Phonograph. Grey Gull. 5219. 1923.

¹⁴⁷ Frank Hoffman, *Encyclopaedia of Recorded Sound* (London: Routledge, 2005), 923-4.

¹⁴⁸ Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra, *Down Hearted Blues*. Phonograph. Grey Gull. 1406=PM. 1923.

¹⁴⁹ Leonard Feather and Ira Gitler ed., *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹⁵⁰ Richard Vacca, *On Troy Street: On June 12, 1983: The Incomparable Mal Hallett*. Published: June 12, 2013. Available: <http://troystreet.com/tspots/2013/06/12/on-june-12-1983-the-incomparable-mal-hallett>. Accessed: June 12, 2014.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

The lack of acknowledgement paid to Hallett in the history books is however indicative of the kind of neglect that has hampered the consideration of Jazz-Age jazz in Boston for almost a century. In reality, ‘an entire generation in the city has grown up largely ignorant of the region's most significant contributors to American music.’¹⁵² This problem is reflected in history on the period. Richard Vacca’s concentrated work on jazz in Boston, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife, 1937-1962*¹⁵³ affords a mere two pages to jazz in the city during the twenties, almost leading one to believe that jazz was somewhat insignificant during this period. And while Mark Schneider has produced several historical studies on Boston and its black population during the early twentieth century, his work *African Americans in the Jazz Age: A Decade of Struggle and Promise*,¹⁵⁴ a study of the music across America, makes only fleeting references to Boston in the form of acknowledging the influence of the NAACP,¹⁵⁵ Urban League,¹⁵⁶ and the Women’s Social Club.¹⁵⁷

When considering this in the strata of black Boston history focused on the 1920s, a lack of attention is more the norm than the exception. Oddly, in a general sense what research there is into the city’s black community and its activities during the first half of the twentieth century often stops short of or bypasses the decade altogether. Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck’s study in social discontinuity, *Boston 1865-1900: Black Migration and Poverty*,¹⁵⁸ Mark R. Schneider’s,

¹⁵² New England Jazz Alliance, ‘Local Jazz History: Where’s Boston? Published: 2008. Available: <http://www.nejazz.org/whereis.php>. Accessed: January 11, 2014.

¹⁵³ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife*, 1937-1962 (Boston, Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2013).

¹⁵⁴ Mark R. Schneider, *African Americans in the Jazz Age: A Decade of Struggle and Promise* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

¹⁵⁵ The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is an African-American civil rights organisation in the United States, formed in 1909 by Ida B. Wells, W. E. B. Du Bois, Archibald Grimké, and more.

¹⁵⁶ Founded in 1910, ‘The National Urban League, more commonly known as the Urban League, is a non-profit, multiracial organisation that is dedicated to the elimination of racial Segregation and discrimination and to the enhancement of economic and educational opportunities for African Americans throughout the United States. The Urban League’ – *Gale Encyclopaedia of Law, Volume 7* (Michigan: Gale, 2010). 208.

¹⁵⁷ ‘African-American club women created kindergartens, day nurseries, social settlements, reading rooms, youth clubs, and children's camps, as well as homes for dependent and orphaned children, for the elderly and infirm, and for young working women. Club members also studied literature, art, drama, and municipal reform.’ - Anne Meis Knupfer, Historical Research and Narrative. ‘African-American Womens Clubs in Chicago 1890 to 1920’. Available: <http://www.lib.niu.edu/2003/ih1020311.html>. Accessed: June 2, 2014.

¹⁵⁸ Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck, *Boston 1865-1900: Black Migration and Poverty* (London: Academic Press Inc, 1979).

Boston Confronts Jim Crow: 1890-1920;¹⁵⁹ Joseph Marr Cronin's, *Reforming Boston Schools, 1930-2006: Overcoming Corruption and Racial Segregation*¹⁶⁰, and Anthony Mitchell Sammarco's, *Boston: A Century of Progress*,¹⁶¹ which offers a passing glance at the decade (1822-1922), are notable examples.

Furthermore, these works rarely hone in on the significance of culture in Boston. As such, the significance of jazz and other forms of expression that have been considered national mediums of black protest and means of achieving social uplift during the first half of the twentieth century are overlooked.¹⁶² Rather, the focuses of these works are primarily on the notions of urbanisation, industrialisation, and modernisation within the frameworks of post-abolitionism, economic mobility, independent politics, and family life.¹⁶³ Little consideration is given to the quest for black self-sufficiency, and these works fall short of locating a black voice that speaks on its own terms the language of collective locus of agency during the period.¹⁶⁴

Press reports on jazz are likewise a difficult terrain to navigate. In the first instance, the task of piecing together aspects of the music's history between 1919 and 1929 using such a medium due to the dilapidated state of the city's newspaper annals is somewhat of an arduous and unrewarding task. For example, the offices of *the Post*, *the Chronicle*, and *the Daily Record* all closed over fifty years ago and to date there is no archive available in digital or hard copy. In addition, while the Public Library holds archives for over thirty newspapers active during the 1920s, including the black weekly, the *Boston Guardian*, the collections are for the

¹⁵⁹ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow: 1890-1920* (Boston: Northeastern University, 1997).

¹⁶⁰ Joseph Marr Cronin, *Reforming Boston Schools, 1930-2006: Overcoming Corruption and Racial Segregation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

¹⁶¹ Anthony Mitchell Sammarco, *Boston: A Century of Progress* (South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 1995).

¹⁶² Orville Vernon Burton, Book Review: Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck. *Black Migration and Poverty: Boston 1865-1900* (New York: Academic Press, 1979). *Social Science History*. Vol. 5, No. 4. Autumn, 1981. 483-488

¹⁶³ James A. Rawley, History: Review of Books: Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow: 1890-1920* (Boston: Northeastern University, 1997), *Taylor & Francis Online*. Volume 26, issue 3, 1998. 120. Available: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03612759.1998.10528084#.VVT_KblViko. Accessed: June 3, 2014.

¹⁶⁴ G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 129-132.

most part incomplete.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, of these broadsheets only the leading white papers of the time, the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald* are digitised. Thus, the sheer volume of pages of untagged information in hard copy makes searching for specific names and places at the very least, arduous.¹⁶⁶

Furthermore, the digitised copies of the *Globe* and the *Herald* are not necessarily the most revealing of sources.¹⁶⁷ By the mid-1920s, both papers boasted white ownership and predominantly white audiences, achieving purported circulations of over 200,000 copies daily.¹⁶⁸ With this in mind, it is no wonder that much of what is found in these papers is determined firstly by their target readership, and secondly by who bought advertising. In terms of the latter, affluent society venues, such as Boston's well-regarded Stadtler Hotel at Arlington Street, used column inches to promote their shows.¹⁶⁹ A by-product of this was that their performers, who as the archives show were rarely black, were widely promoted and thus achieved local distinction relatively quickly.¹⁷⁰

Vacca goes as far as to suggest that nationally the mainstream media during the 1920s pretended the black community 'did not exist'.¹⁷¹ In fact, it was not until George Frazier's column in the *Boston Herald* in 1942, two decades on from the Jazz Age, that black invocations of the music in the city received any kind of significant recognition.¹⁷² Before this time, the Boston press largely fell in-line with the white-led media across America and consistently adopted a stance of indifference. Such a stance time and again resulted in writing that sought to demean jazz as at best an unrefined and at worst 'dangerous' art form.¹⁷³ Thus, in the midst

¹⁶⁵ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife*, 1937-1962 (Boston, Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2013). xii

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ The *Globe* and the *Herald* were Boston's leading newspapers of the time.

¹⁶⁸ Paula Kepos, Thomas Derdak ed., *International Directory of Company Histories, Volume 7* (Michigan: St. James Press, 1993). 14.

¹⁶⁹ Frank H. Lancaster, Ernest F. Birmingham, *Fourth Estate: A Weekly Newspaper for Publishers, Advertisers, Advertising Agents and Allied Interests* (New York: Fourth Estate Publishing Company, 1926), 13-19.

¹⁷⁰ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife*, 1937-1962 (Boston, Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2013), xii.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Charles Fountain, George Frazier, *Another man's poison: the life and writings of columnist George Frazier* (Connecticut: Globe Pequot Press, 1984), 70-77.

¹⁷³ Jeffrey Noonan, *The Guitar in America: Victorian Era to Jazz Age: American Made Music* (Mississippi: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2008), 128.

of fractured race–relations, the press can be seen to have been largely anti–jazz and used this angle outwardly to propagate anti-black sentiments. The *Boston Globe* went as far as to publish an article that alleged the music was a by-product of African savagery - in particular cannibalism - transported from the continent, declaring it to have been at one time a ritualistic soundtrack to a vicious and barbaric act.¹⁷⁴

While young, emergent black writers in the twenties did pay attention to jazz, with New York-based socialist activist and writer, Langston Hughes being the most impressive example, such voices were few.¹⁷⁵ The writings and publications of the ‘New Negro’ (which feature in chapter three of this thesis) during the decade suggests that although an ambition existed to advance the race through artistic achievement, jazz was largely ignored – an irony, if ever there was one, given the status of Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson and musical figures championed by Du Bois and Locke. As Nathan Irvin Huggins, who was particularly critical of the literary productions of the Harlem Renaissance, put it: ‘It is very ironic that a generation that was searching for a new Negro and his distinctive cultural expression would have passed up on the only really creative thing that was going on’.¹⁷⁶

In Boston, the lack of media coverage and in a general sense writing on black jazz is compounded by the fact that all of its players and the witnesses to the music’s formation years in the city are now gone.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, there is little in the way of recorded testimonies, and there are not volumes of carefully compiled information,¹⁷⁸ troves of journals, diaries, photographs, and sheet music available. As such, an entire generation of musicians, who often doubled as spokespersons for their race, have been lost.¹⁷⁹ In this sense therefore, all that stands between the present and forgetting is what Vacca describes as a dilapidated public

¹⁷⁴ Capt. Jean B. Le Meitour, ‘Our French Captain is Razzled by the Jazz – He Discovers its Terrible Origins’, *The Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 28, 1919. p, 6.

¹⁷⁵ Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume I: 1902-1941, I, Too, Sing America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹⁷⁶ Nathan Irvin Huggins in Burton W. Peretti, *The Creation of Jazz: Music, Race, and Culture in Urban America* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 55.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Joyce Ferriabough in Robert C Hayden, *African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years* (Boston, Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1991), 9.

¹⁷⁹ Vandermark, Stu. Email to Craig Doughty, ‘Boston Jazz 1900-1929: Primary Source Material’. September 29, 2014.

record, consisting of 'tattered city directories', 'reels of microfilm of varying quality',¹⁸⁰ and an array of assorted but decaying source materials such as Public Library compiled scrapbooks of newspaper clippings,¹⁸¹ turn of the century social studies,¹⁸² census data,¹⁸³ and handbooks of statistics.¹⁸⁴

That said, however, as decayed and potted as this collection of sources is, as an overall body it provides the most viable insight into the principally untapped history of Boston jazz from 1919 to 1929. Thus, more importantly this body assists in the process of repositioning a portion of unheard black voices from the margins. As previously noted, the aim of this dissertation is to transform this body of fragments into a jazz history that not only counteracts the gaps in the historical record but also through a process of methodological construction, forms coherent patterns of historical reflection that connect with and where possible recreate the lives of blacks in Boston. During their lifetimes these individuals were largely unheard and were denied access to lines of social mobility, and they have since that time not been considered to a satisfactory level in the historical narrative. This lack of acknowledgement has thus subjected them to an ongoing double oppression.¹⁸⁵ Simply put, therefore, this work seeks to hear these individuals on their own terms.¹⁸⁶ As novelist Ariel Dorfman states, 'People aren't voiceless; we're deaf - we don't hear them'.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁰ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife*, 1937-1962 (Boston, Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2013). xii-xiii

¹⁸¹ Boston Public Library, Music Dept: Nonfiction – Call # MUSIC M.474.58, Boston Public Library, "Jazz" Clippings, 1922-1929 (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1930).

¹⁸² Roxbury Community College Library, Circulating Stacks – Call # HN80 .B7 W8 1970B, Robert Archey Woods, *The City Wilderness: A Settlement Study* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, c1898).

¹⁸³ Boston Public Library: Social Sciences, Government Documents. Call # GOV DOCS HA201 1920 .A15 2000x. Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Volume III Population – Age for Cities and Towns of 10,000 or More 1920. Page 438.

¹⁸⁴ Boston Public Library, Music Dept: Nonfiction – Call # MUSIC M.4049A.179, Boston Musical Bureau, *Handbook of Musical Statistics* (Boston: Boston Musical Bureau, 1905).

¹⁸⁵ G. C. Spivak, C. M Rosalind, , *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 55.

¹⁸⁶ Priscilla Wald, *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 231.

¹⁸⁷ S. A. Mclennen, *Ariel Dorfman: An Aesthetics of Hope* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 334.

3. The History of Subaltern Studies: a Methodological Approach to Constructing a History from Fragments

Beginning in 1987, critical theorist, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has repeatedly developed ideas on subalternity, many of which have come to define the school's approach to constructing histories of oppressed peoples at the margins of a society. One such example is a process of metonymisation that Spivak refers to as 'insertion into the public sphere'.¹⁸⁸ By this, she describes the relation of academics to their subject(s) and more importantly, the state. In this respect, she asserts that there is an abstract hole that one must fill in order to claim. The need, in this respect, is to understand the part by which you are connected.¹⁸⁹ This means that academics must modify their own methodologies and perspective(s) to allow for the differences between their (hegemonically-centred) view and that of their subjects. Furthermore, the key aim in this instance is principally to fashion new relationships between academics and the populations that they are studying.¹⁹⁰

Drawing on the ideas of Spivak, this work utilises a cross-disciplinary approach for the construction of a history from fragments. My approach fuses elements of subaltern studies, which are focused on the locating of voice, with notions of musicological close reading to transform Boston jazz musicianship into a form of language.¹⁹¹ Subaltern studies, since its conception, has served as a means with which historians (and theoreticians) have expanded their language. As Spivak notes, the task is not to study the subaltern but to learn.¹⁹² In doing so, studies into subalternity have consistently recognised the historically-subordinate position of the lives of various groups of oppressed and underrepresented people. In recognising the

¹⁸⁸ University of California: Order Catalog No. 4159. University of California Television (UCTV), 'The Trajectory of the Subaltern in My Work'. DVD Recording. Recorded: March 8, 2004. Time: 28:01 – 29:53.

¹⁸⁹ G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, , *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 55.

¹⁹⁰ The Latin American Subaltern Studies Group: Who is the Subaltern and what is Testimonio? Available: <http://digitalunion.osu.edu/r2/summer06/herbert/testimoniosubaltern/index.html>, Accessed: December 21, 2011.

¹⁹¹ C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 132.

¹⁹² G. C. Spivak, *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: Live Theory* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 24.

‘subalternity’ of such people, these works have devised methods which create the space to allow them to speak.¹⁹³

The earliest known usage of the term ‘Subaltern’ was in reference to minor functionaries (English, Indian, and Anglo-Indian) of low rank in the British military forces during its colonial regime in India (1757 – 1858).¹⁹⁴ In the 1920s, the term was appropriated by Italian socialist, political theorist and activist, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937).¹⁹⁵ Seeking to publish work of a political nature while imprisoned, under the order of Benito Mussolini,¹⁹⁶ Gramsci used the term covertly to evade prison censors. In his *Notes on Italian History*, a six-point project that appears in his *Prison Notebooks*,¹⁹⁷ ‘subaltern’ was used as a substitute for ‘proletariat’.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, shortly before his death in 1937, while working on economically disposed peoples, specifically the unorganised groups of rural peasants based in Southern Italy, Gramsci used the term interchangeably to mean subordinate or non-hegemonic groups or classes.¹⁹⁹

Inspired by Gramsci’s work, subaltern studies began in England in the late 1970s, with a focus on the need to excavate the history of marginalised peoples in Asia.²⁰⁰ In its earliest forms, a small group, spearheaded by Ranajit Guha (one of the most celebrated historians of modern India) and eight collaborators²⁰¹ published a series of studies annually in journal form

¹⁹³ C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 132.

¹⁹⁴ G. Bhadra, G. Prakash, S. Tharu, *Subaltern studies: writings on South Asian history and society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 8.

¹⁹⁵ Antonio Gramsci was a pivotal intellectual and politician; a founder of the Italian Communist Party whose ideas greatly influenced Italian communism.

¹⁹⁶ Gramsci led a leftist walkout at the Socialist congress at Livorno in January of 1921 to found the Italian Communist Party. He was in 1924 elected to the country’s Chamber of Deputies. In 1926, his party was outlawed by fascist leader, Benito Mussolini, and he was arrested and imprisoned.

¹⁹⁷ Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks, Volume 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

¹⁹⁸ M. E. Green, *Rethinking Gramsci*, (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008), 84.

¹⁹⁹ Gramsci claimed that the subaltern classes had just as complex a history as the dominant classes. However, this “unofficial” history was necessarily fragmented and episodic since even when they rebel, the subaltern are always subject to the activity of the ruling classes. In Gramsci’s theory, the term ‘subaltern’ linked up with the subordinated consciousness of non-elite groups.

²⁰⁰ Bijay Kumar Das, *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism* (New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers & Dist, 2005), 141.

²⁰¹ ‘In Search of Transcendence: An Interview with Ranajit Guha’, Interview (in Bengali) with Ranajit Guha (RG). Conducted: February 2, 2010, at his home in Purkersdorf (near Vienna), Austria. Interviewer: Milinda Banerjee (MB), PhD Researcher, Cluster of Excellence ‘Asia & Europe’. Available:

through the New Delhi branch of Oxford University Press.²⁰² By the close of the 1980s, the group had produced a total of thirty-four essays and fifteen related books on the subject, including Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's seminal work, 'Can the Subaltern Speak',²⁰³ considered by many scholars, including Henry Schwarz, and Sangeeta Ray, to be a founding text of postcolonialism.²⁰⁴

Out of this strong beginning, with continued mentorship by Guha, during 1982 the 'Subaltern Studies Group' was formed.²⁰⁵ Bringing together an eclectic array of South Asian scholars, this collective primarily sought to enrich Gramsci's notion of the subaltern by locating and re-establishing a collective locus of agency (i.e., a 'voice') in postcolonial India—notably amongst the peasantry, women, tribal communities, and working classes.²⁰⁶ In doing so, emphasis was placed on the need to redress the imbalance created in academic work that tended to focus on elites and elite culture in South Asian historiography that was produced by British colonialists and local bourgeois nationalists. For example, Guha argued that the historiography of the victorious pro-independence movement²⁰⁷ largely failed to acknowledge or interpret the contribution made by 'the people on their own', namely those independent of the elite.²⁰⁸

Guha asserts, with specific reference to South Asian society, that subaltern describes a person 'of inferior rank', and should thus be used 'as a name for the general attribute of

http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/history/download/ranajit_guha_interview_2.2.11.pdf. Accessed: June 23, 2014.

²⁰² David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia* (London: Anthem Press, 2002), 1.

²⁰³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.

²⁰⁴ Neil Larsen 'Imperialism, Colonialism, Postcolonialism': 4.2 Said/Spivak' in Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray, *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 46.

²⁰⁵ Jonathan Hearn, *Theorizing Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 194.

²⁰⁶ John Charles Hawley, *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies* (London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 425.

²⁰⁷ The term 'pro-independence movement' is related to the 'Indian Independent Movement': In short, this movement encompasses activities and ideas that aimed to end East India Company rule (1757–1858), and then the British Raj (1858–1947). The independence movement saw various national and regional campaigns, agitations and efforts of violent and non-violent means.

²⁰⁸ R. Guha, *Selected Subaltern Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 39.

subordination'.²⁰⁹ This approach has been adopted and to some extent expanded by the 'Subaltern Studies Group', who as a collective have consistently used the term to refer to marginalized groups and the lower classes, namely persons rendered without agency by their social status.²¹⁰ Thus, subalternity has been seen as the severest form of oppression – oppression absolute.²¹¹ In contrast, others such as Dipesh Chakrabarty and Vinayak Chaturvedi use the term in a more specific sense, referring to the subaltern as a group – for example, Indians under the British Empire, who were unable to express themselves and their culture due to domination.²¹²

Today, through a vast and eclectic body of writings – including over two-hundred essays spread over ten volumes – subaltern studies has achieved worldwide status. So much so that over the course of the last 25 years, scholars have appropriated its focus on postcolonial critiques of South Asian and Indian subjects to suit eclectic analyses in European, Latin American, and African studies, as well as feminist and cultural history and more.²¹³ For example, Nikkita Dhawan in her 2007 essay entitled, 'Can the Subaltern Speak German? And Other Risky Questions'²¹⁴ discussed aspects of racism, interculturality, and globalisation within the parameters of migrant hybridism and subalternity in a postcolonial German-speaking context.²¹⁵ What subaltern studies means in a contemporary sense differs greatly from its original interest in the history of internal and external oppression of subjects rendered without agency in India.

²⁰⁹ Ranjit Guha states that the aim of the collective is 'to promote a systematic and informed discussion of subaltern themes in the field of South Asian studies, and thus help rectify the elitist bias characteristic of much research and academic work in this particular area'. – M. E. Green. *Rethinking Gramsci* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2011), 82.

²¹⁰ In contrast, Spivak argues that 'just by being a discriminated-against minority on the university campus, they don't need the word 'subaltern'. . . They should see what the mechanics of the discrimination are. They're within the hegemonic discourse wanting a piece of the pie and not being allowed, so let them speak, use the hegemonic discourse.

²¹¹ David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia* (New York: Anthem Press, 2002), 351.

²¹² V. Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (New York: Verso, 2000), 27.

²¹³ Ileana Rodríguez, María Milagros López, *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2001), 199.

²¹⁴ Nikkita Dhawan, 'Can the Subaltern Speak German? And Other Risky Questions Migrant Hybridism versus Subalternity'. Published: April 25, 2007.

Available: <http://translate.eipcp.net/strands/03/dhawan-strands01en#redir>. Accessed: April 1, 2015.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

Intellectuals from various regions and disciplines have adopted similar research projects and modes of investigation, often loosely using Gramscian ideas pertaining to excluded and restricted citizens, class, caste, age, gender, and office as starting points. The term is no longer solely used and defined by acknowledged subalternists and thus subaltern peoples have been reinvented disparately.²¹⁶ This has allowed feminist theorists, sociologists, economists, musicologists and others to specifically sub-categorise subalternity into areas such as gender, ethnicity, and social status. A notable example is the contribution of the sociologist, Sousa Boaventura de Santos, who devised ‘subaltern cosmopolitanism’. In this sense, subaltern is used to denote marginalised and oppressed people(s) specifically those struggling against hegemonic globalisation,²¹⁷ as seen for example in campaigns against water privatisation in Latin America, or the fight for antiretroviral drugs in Africa.²¹⁸

As a consequence, subaltern studies has increasingly asserted that the principle of identity, explicitly the demand for stable and reasoned characteristics of meaning and materiality, is rooted in the notion of binary logic as a means of establishing difference. Spivak asserts in her work, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ that difference is deemed to be anything deviant from the defining centre; for example, communist opposition to the fascist right, or Negro resistance to white domination in the American South.²¹⁹ In short, hegemony and subaltern can be expressed in emphatically spatial terms as the relation between core (or centre) and periphery (or margin).²²⁰ Away from Spivak’s research, this approach is perhaps best exemplified by the work of post-colonialist thinker, Homi Bhabha.²²¹ While emphasising the importance of social power relations, Bhabha defined subaltern groups as

²¹⁶ G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 132.

²¹⁷ B. de Sousa Santos, *Law And Globalization From Below: Towards A Cosmopolitan Legality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 12.

²¹⁸ B. de Sousa Santos in Scott Veitch, Emiliós Christodoulidis, Lindsay Farmer, *Jurisprudence: Themes and Concepts* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 242.

²¹⁹ Micahel Keith and Steve Pile, *Place and the politics of identity* (London: Routledge, 1993), 201.

²²⁰ Micahel Keith and Steve Pile, *Place and the politics of identity* (London: Routledge, 1993), 201.

²²¹ Together with Edward W. Said and Gayatri Spivak, Homi K. Bhabha makes up what Robert Young describes as ‘the Holy Trinity’ of postcolonial critics who have achieved the greatest eminence in the field. Bart Moore-Gilbert, ‘Spivak and Bhabha’ in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Ed by Henry Schwartz and Sangeeta Ray (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 451.

oppressed minorities whose presence was crucial to the self-definition of the majority group.²²²

Broadening of this nature, however, has led to disagreements as to whom subalternity applies and has meant that subaltern academics have largely failed to agree upon a workable definition. As David Ludden remarks, 'The intellectual history of subalternity has emerged outside and in opposition to subaltern studies as much as inside it'.²²³ Mapping its many transitions in terms of cause and effect is difficult. Change has inevitably occurred within the subaltern studies project. In recent years, Spivak has emerged as one of the most outspoken sceptics of the eclectic ways in which the school of thought has been appropriated to fit differing disciplines, subjects, and histories. She notes that subaltern 'isn't just a classy word for oppressed, for 'other', for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie'.²²⁴

A notable example of Spivak's issue with the broadening of subaltern studies is found in her criticisms of the 'Subaltern Studies Group' itself. She argued that in re-appropriating Gramsci's use of the term subaltern, the group, with a view to improving the condition of subaltern subjects by granting them collective speech, ironically subjected them to a double oppression. Unable to speak for themselves in their own environments, subaltern scholars have, in choosing to speak for the subaltern condition rather than allowing them to speak for themselves, repeatedly subjected them to a double oppression. In this sense, the role of the Subaltern Studies Group should not be to give subalterns 'a voice' (which Guha saw as the main aim) but rather, as previously noted, to create the space to allow them to speak.²²⁵

Spivak best exemplifies this notion in her reflections on sati (also known as *suttee*) women, who on occasion in the aftermath of their husband's death engaged in a traditional

²²²Dr. Abhishek Gopal, Concept of Subaltern and Subaltern Studies. Available: http://www.onlineijra.com/catogery/english%20research%20paper/Concept_of_Subaltern_and_Subaltern_Studies.pdf. Accessed: May 09, 2012

²²³ D. E. Ludden, *Reading subaltern studies: critical history, contested meaning, and the globalisation of South Asia* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001), 3.

²²⁴ S.R. Gnanamony, *Literary Polyrhythms: New Voices in New Writings in English* (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2005), 269.

²²⁵ G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 132.

practice of chosen self-immolation on the husband's funeral pyre.²²⁶ Under British colonial rule, however, choice was replaced by use of military force as a means of prevention.²²⁷ In using the example of sati women - women who were assigned no position of autonomy, and worse no position of articulation - Spivak provided a definitive example of hegemonically-restricted subaltern subjects, both in a figurative and a methodological sense.²²⁸ She argued that the British outlawing of the sati ritual had been wrongly celebrated as a positive act, asserting that its ban had the effect of damming the women to a double oppression.²²⁹ Moreover, because sati widows were unable to produce noise – i.e., justification for the perpetuation of the ritual - that was intelligible to both the British and Indian communities, they were – Spivak argued – ‘subaltern’ who were literally unable to speak.²³⁰

Despite the complexities of definition and applicability, and irrespective of broadening, subaltern studies has consistently focused on people who existed and exist socially, politically, and geographically outside of hegemonic power structures.²³¹ In the context of her work on subalternity in Haiti, Peru, and Argentina, Illena Rodriguez stipulated that the primary requisite when identifying subaltern subjects is to ‘recognise their refusal *to be* complicit with the hegemonic production of narratives of heterogeneity as a product of the movement of capital’.²³² In short, emphasis is placed on peoples, regardless of location, who are socially, politically, and geographically detached from yet afflicted by the structures of hegemony. As Spivak states:

Political action is a form of ethical responsibility – actors should not speak on behalf of someone else, representing their claims for them. Rather they should create the

²²⁶ Uma Narayan, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism* (London: Routledge, 2013), 85.

²²⁷ The best-known form of sati is when a woman burns to death on her husband's funeral pyre. However other forms of sati exist, including being buried alive with the husband's corpse and drowning.

²²⁸ There were many incidences in which Hindu women were dragged against their wishes to the lighted pyre.

²²⁹ Sandra Ponzanesi, *Paradoxes of Postcolonial Culture: Sanskrit Terms Defined in English* (New York: SUNY Press, 2012), 154.

²³⁰ S. Morton, *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 64-5.

²³¹ G. C. Spivak, C. M. Rosalind, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 131-132.

²³² I. Rodriguez, *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2001), 83.

space to allow them to represent themselves and be prepared to overcome their own privileges and knowledge to listen to the subaltern in their own terms.²³³

4. Can the Subaltern Play? Music as rebellion; jazz as voice

4.1. Subalternity and Music

One of the most interesting developments in contemporary subaltern studies has been its growing engagement with culture. Seeking to combat the ways in which the subaltern voice is silenced in the local and global arenas, Spivak has argued a case for the use of eclectic forms of communication.²³⁴ These forms included cultural mediums such as literary texts, films, songs, and so on.²³⁵ This extension has been developed over the last two decades by scholars from an array of disciplines, including media and entertainment scholars, Emma Baulch and Rebecca Romanow. Baulch's research on heavy metal and punk music in Bali²³⁶ and Rebecca Romanow's 2005 study, 'But... Can the Subaltern Sing?'²³⁷ have both employed notions of 'comparative cultural studies',²³⁸ and utilised anthropological perspectives on musical play.²³⁹

Furthermore, in recent years several accomplished studies have discussed the role of music as a form of protest to subjugation, repression, and as a means of locating voice. Anne Schumann's 2008 work, 'The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance against Apartheid in South Africa',²⁴⁰ and Megan Sullivan's 2001 study, *African-American*

²³³ G. C. Spivak, Rosalind, C, M, *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010), 54.

²³⁴ Gayatri Spivak in Rebecca Romanow, 'But... Can the Subaltern Sing?', *Comparative Culture and Literature*. Volume 7; Issue 2, 2005. Page, 2. Available: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/submit.html>. Accessed: June 12, 2014.

²³⁵ G. C. Spivak, C. M Rosalind, , *Can the subaltern speak? - Reflections on the history of an idea*, (West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2010).

²³⁶ Emma Bauch, *Making Scenes: Reggae, Punk, and Death Metal in 1990s Bali* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007).

²³⁷ Rebecca Romanow, 'But... Can the Subaltern Sing?', *Comparative Culture and Literature*. Volume 7; Issue 2, 2005. pp. 2-11. Available: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/submit.html>. Accessed: June 12, 2014.

²³⁸ David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia* (New York: Anthem Press, 2012), 26.

²³⁹ David Borgo, 'The Play of Meaning and the Meaning of Play in Jazz'. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. Volume 11. 2004. Pp. 174-190.

²⁴⁰ Anne Schumann, 'The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance against Apartheid in South Africa', *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für Kritisches Afrikastudien*. Nr. 14/2008, 8. pp. 17-39.

*Music as Rebellion: From Slavesong to Hip-Hop*²⁴¹ are two important examples that explore music as an emotive, political tool for uniting peoples in opposition to domination. What Romanow's work does, however, is appropriate Spivak's subaltern model into a mode of analysis that focuses on voice through a portal of cultural imperialism; i.e., the ways in which western rock music (The Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, The Carpenters, Queen, and Radiohead) has polluted the cultural landscape of the east. Romanow argues that the social and cultural power of exported American and British rock music has created a silencing of non-Western voices in the region.²⁴²

In addition to Romanow's work, over the course of the last two decades a wealth of research projects that have focused on cultural analysis via subalternity have been undertaken. These studies have not only broadened the scope of subaltern research but have also, in a sense created a wholly independent strand of research investigation. This stand has at its core an interest in music as a vehicle for political, social, and cultural concerns of voice and expression. An important example is Jesse Samba Wheeler's 'Rumba Lingala as Colonial Resistance',²⁴³ which examines how, through the creation of a new musical style in the late 1940s and 1950s, Congolese Rumba Lingala musicians, contested colonial authority and envisioned an independent future.²⁴⁴

The exploration of music and subalternity has also in recent years stretched to considerations of jazz music as voice. Studies such as Nanette de Jong's 2005 work, 'We Are Who We Believe Ourselves to Be: Curaco Jazz and the Expression of Identity'²⁴⁵ and aspects

²⁴¹ Megan Sullivan, *African-American Music as Rebellion: from Slavesong to Hip-Hop* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2001).

²⁴² Rebecca Romanow, 'But... Can the Subaltern Sing?', *Comparative Culture and Literature*. Volume 7; Issue 2, 2005. pp. 2-11.

²⁴³ Jesse Samba Wheeler, 'Rumba Lingala as Colonial Resistance' in 'The Visualization of the Subaltern in World Music. On Musical Contestation Strategies (Part 1)'. *Image [&] Narrative*. Issue 10. March 2005.

Available online: <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/worldmusica/jessesambawheeler.htm>. Accessed: June 12, 2014.

²⁴⁴ At the height of colonial oppression, these artists stimulated their compatriots through song to rethink the meaning of being Congolese, a poetic and powerful aspect of the liberation struggle.

²⁴⁵ Nanette de Jong's, 'We Are Who We Believe Ourselves to Be: Curaco Jazz and the Expression of Identity' *Image [&] Narrative*. Issue 10. The Visualization of the Subaltern in World Music. On Musical Contestation Strategies (Part 1). Published: March 2005.

Available online:

of David Yaffe's 2009 work, *Fascinating Rhythm: Reading Jazz in American Writing*²⁴⁶ are two examples that use aspects of musicological and linguistic analysis to appropriate the music into a form of dialogue. While contemporary in publication, the impetus for this work, however, can be traced back some two decades to Krin Gabbard's 1995 study, *Jazz among the Discourses*.²⁴⁷ In that work, he presented the first tentative marriage of subaltern studies and music, suggesting that 'It would be possible to extract a voluminous register of the subaltern personnel of jazz history from musical' recollections, oral histories, and interviews'.²⁴⁸

However, Gabbard's assertion lends itself more to the concept of projecting voice rather than locating it. The notion of using only sources that deal with memory, in particular testimony gathered years after the fact, offers only a retrospective smattering of voice over a particular period. In this framework, the Spivakian idea of locating voice and creating the space to allow it to speak is all but rendered redundant. While Gabbard's approach is useful when constructing fragmented histories blighted by severe erasure (for example, history expunged in the course of dictatorship), writing a history of Boston jazz from 1919 to 1929 can be achieved by working directly with material from the period. As such, musical recollections, oral histories, and interviews serve as supplementary materials to the music itself, which is considered the truest essence of voice available.

4.2. A brief history of jazz analysis

The history of jazz analysis has primarily focused on three strands of investigation that deal for the most part with notions of definition, addressing the question, 'What is jazz?'. In musicological terms, the first strand of analysis reflects on jazz's key audial elements and

<http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/worldmusica/nanettedejong.htm> Accessed: June 12, 2014.

²⁴⁶ David Yaffe, *Fascinating Rhythm: Reading Jazz in American Writing* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), 184.

²⁴⁷ Kim Gabbard, *Jazz Among the Discourses* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 146-7.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

structures. André Hodeir²⁴⁹ and Gunther Schuller²⁵⁰ for example have consistently discussed jazz within the context of elements such as rhythm, harmony, melody, and improvisation. The second strand is a social analysis that deals with ethnicity, uplift, and cultural value; historian, Scott DeVeaux is a particular advocate.²⁵¹ He argues, using African-Americans as the nucleus of his definition that ‘ethnicity provides a core, a centre of gravity for the definition of jazz’.²⁵² Such a definition, however, does not account for how white jazz musicians are to be understood. And finally, there is a historical approach, based on a more linear approach. For example, Mitchell Newton-Matza in his work *Jazz Age: People and Perspectives* focuses on cultural, political, and economic developments during the ‘Jazz Age’, 1918 -1920.²⁵³

In terms of elements, from its origins to the modern day, jazz has been presented as a conglomeration of cultures (in the main, African, European, and Caribbean), personalities, skills, and visions fused together to form some semblance of metrical, melodious art.²⁵⁴ Combined, these aspects give jazz, especially formative conceptions, its characteristic sound. In the main, jazz music exists primarily in unique moments of spontaneity, which perhaps explains, in part, why definition has become something of a difficult terrain to navigate. Proposed classifications are often either restrictive – overlooking a lot of music we consider to be jazz – or too inclusive – referring to anything and everything as jazz.²⁵⁵ Music professors, Henry Martin and Keith Waters note that ‘entire articles have been written on the futility of pinning down the precise meaning of jazz’.²⁵⁶

For over a century, musicologists, music lovers, historians, and others have debated the jazz definition. John Humphries, author of the *Music Master Jazz Catalogue*²⁵⁷ remarked,

²⁴⁹ André Hodeir, *Jazz: Its Evolution and Essence* (New York City: Grove Press, 1956).

²⁵⁰ Gunther Schuller., *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

²⁵¹ Scott DeVeaux cited in Paul Rinzier., *The Contradictions of Jazz – Studies in Jazz* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2008). 95.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Michael Newton-Matza., *Jazz Age: People and Perspectives* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2009). xiii.

²⁵⁴ R. Lawn., *Experiencing Jazz* (London: Routledge, 2010). 50.

²⁵⁵ Doug Ramsey, *Jazz Matters, Reflections on Music and Some of Its Makers* (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2008), 174.

²⁵⁶ H. Martin., K. Waters., *Jazz, The First One-Hundred Years* (Connecticut: Cengage Learning, 2005). 3.

²⁵⁷ Music Master., *The Official Music Master Jazz Catalogue* (Sussex: John Humphries, 1990).

‘Ask ten genuine enthusiasts (What is jazz?) and likely you will receive ten different answers’.²⁵⁸ Early developments in jazz, beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, laid the foundations of its craft in the forms of improvised, rhythmical and melodic flashes. Nevertheless, what jazz was in its original forms is certainly different from what it has become. Since its conception, circa 1902, the art form has evolved, mutated and been reconceptualised many times.²⁵⁹ As such, the avant-garde, improvisational creativity of present day Asaf Sirkis Trio²⁶⁰ bears little resemblance to the first known jazz recording, a New Orleans-style twelve-bar blues composition by the ‘Original Dixieland Jass Band’ released in 1917.²⁶¹

Ambiguities affecting both the definition of jazz and the music’s canon in a context lacking historical specificity are furthermore reflected in the problematic distinctions drawn together by discographer Brian Rust in the sixties and seventies. Some scholarship makes room in the jazz tenet for American dance bands that emerged in the interwar years, Rust, however, opted to separate them and produced individual catalogues for the styles.²⁶² While he admitted to much overlap between the two, he often appeared vague about the reasons why certain records were included and others were not. This proves to be somewhat problematic, for instances of dance music do appear in his jazz volume, with Guy Lombardo’s ‘saccharine form’ of the music being a notable example.²⁶³

In short, Rust appears to have drawn distinctions based on certain adjectives as opposed to, in the words of Leonard Bernstein, jazz’s ‘musical innards’.²⁶⁴ Dance music was deemed to be ‘commercial’; ‘sweet’; and ‘romantic’, while conversely jazz was seen as ‘unsweet’; ‘unromantic’, and of course ‘not for dancing’.²⁶⁵ More specific distinctions can

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 7.

²⁵⁹ Schuller, G., *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (Oxford University Press, 1986), 136.

²⁶⁰ Jazz-rock artists, Drummer/Composer: Asaf Sirkis. Available: <http://www.jazz-rock.com/artists-AS.html>. Accessed: May 01, 2013.

²⁶¹ V. Bogdanov., *All Music Guide to Jazz: The Definitive Guide to Jazz Music* (London: Backbeat Books, 2002), 961.

²⁶² Ian Conrich, Estella Tincknell, *Film’s Musical Moments* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 29.

²⁶³ Elijah Wald in David Ake, Charles Hiroshi Garrett, Daniel Goldmark (ed), *Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 34.

²⁶⁴ Leonard Bernstein in *The World of Jazz - Leonard Bernstein: Omnibus - The Historic TV Broadcasts*, Directed by Alastair Cooke (E1 Entertainment, 2010; Original 195), DVD.

²⁶⁵ Krin Gabbard, *Jazz Among the Discourses* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 102-3

however be drawn. While jazz was predominantly an African-American art form, dance music was predominantly (although not exclusively) white, which may account for its more popular appeal, especially in segregated southern states.²⁶⁶ On a more technical level, dance music lacked the syncopated rhythms and foregrounded improvisation of jazz. It was more architecturally formulaic, with heavy orchestration and little scope for improvisation.

One of the first people to focus on the social and political functions of the music was German sociologist, Theodor Adorno. In bypassing the inventory of musical qualities and techniques in pursuit of a non-musical approach, Adorno created a sweeping definition within a cultural context that at the same time attacked the art form.²⁶⁷ His primary focus was on the decoding of the music's political implications; presenting jazz as a type of entertainment and 'dance music', that first appeared in 1914.²⁶⁸ Furthermore, Adorno stated that propagandist jazz writers (such as New York's, Langston Hughes) had perpetuated what amounted to an elaborate misrepresentation of the music, adding that they had put forward a false notion of jazz rebellion against social and political regimentation.²⁶⁹

Adorno also argued that jazz functioned as a capitalistic commodity: in specific terms, a form of pseudo-individualisation, disguised in the elaborate trappings of proletarian primitivism and spontaneity.²⁷⁰ While this approach has its merits, unlike conventional jazz discussions, Adorno provided no specific historical context (and precious few factual examples) for his definition. Furthermore, he did not differentiate between various types of songs such as hit tunes, dance, jazz, and folk, choosing rather to treat them in the main as a whole body devoid of distinctions.²⁷¹ Thus, his critique is underpinned by the ambiguous

²⁶⁶ Ian Conrich, Estella Tincknell, *Film's Musical Moments* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 29-30.

²⁶⁷ Krin Gabbard, *Jazz among the discourses* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 101.

²⁶⁸ Theodor W. Adorno, *Musikalische Schriften, Volume 6* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 393.

²⁶⁹ Theodor W. Adorno, Richard D. Leppert, Susan H. Gillespie, *Essays on Music: Theodor W. Adorno ; Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Richard Leppert ; New Translations by Susan H. Gillespie* (California: University of California Press, 2002), 355.

²⁷⁰ Paul McCann, *Race, Music, and National Identity: Images of Jazz in American Fiction, 1920-1960* (New Jersey: Associated University Presse, 2008), 11.

²⁷¹ Krin Gabbard, *Jazz among the discourses* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 101-102.

characteristic of all mainstream music before him existing in just two categories: popular and serious.²⁷²

Similarly departing from a socio-cultural perspective but with more emphasis on historical depth and racial awareness, Kathy Ogren has arguably provided the best rebuttal of Adorno. Ogren has defined jazz in 1920's America as an Afro-American form of communication, both within the black community and between the races.²⁷³ Her focus on the cultural context of black performance practices in the United States during the 1920s suggests an entire level of meaning which Adorno, perhaps deliberately, overlooked. Ogren's in-depth treatment of jazz in a national-historical and cultural context, which at times can be too broad, does have the capacity to be narrowed so as to focus on specific musicians operating in particular historical times and places.

Since the release of Winthrop Sargeant's pioneering work on the jazz idiom, *Jazz: Hot and Hybrid* (1938)²⁷⁴ much emphasis in the quest for understanding the music has been placed on defining its key audial elements and where possible its arrangements. This approach has provided a wealth of material that deals primarily with notions of music theory, concepts, and language. In this respect, much work on jazz in a theoretical sense has been undertaken within a strict framework of tradition. To use Edward Shils 'theoretical definition' of the terms as a case-in-point, tradition in the context of jazz history is a series of elements 'transmitted or handed down from the past to the present'.²⁷⁵ Exactly what those elements are in terms of the music's broad history is, however, consistently up for debate.

William Howland Kennedy stated that a reliance on practiced historical approaches to definition, namely, a focus on primary source testimony such as formative jazz writing – reveals little for first-hand observers and players often avoided formal definitions.²⁷⁶ But jazz critic and writer, Martin Tudor Hansford Williams, while abiding by Hodeir's notions of a

²⁷² Alex Thomson, *Adorno: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: A&C Black, 2006), 47.

²⁷³ Daniel Hardie, *Jazz Historiography: The Story of Jazz History Writing* (New York: iUniverse, 2013), 274.

²⁷⁴ Winthrop Sargeant, *Jazz: Hot and Hybrid* (Massachusetts: E. P. Dutton, Incorporated, 1946).

²⁷⁵ Edward Shils, *Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983).

²⁷⁶ William Howland Kennedy cited in Gabbard. K., *Jazz Among the Discourses* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995). 100

definitive rhythmic essence, suggested that jazz could be defined by ‘a series of examples of musical tradition shaped by selected, musically influential performers’. Schuller, somewhat in keeping, defined jazz by its outstanding practitioners and their shared stylistics. This definition proves, though, in the grander-scheme of things to be all too restrictive, posing the question, should we consider the jazz musicians, jazz groups, and jazz collectives omitted from their analyses, who have built careers on an association with the idiom, to have played something other than jazz?

In the broadest sense of jazz history, however, musicologist Scott DeVeaux argues that the notion of tradition is ‘relational and negatively productive’.²⁷⁷ When defined by the rigidity of its emphasised musical characteristics, jazz presents an inflexibility that poses many problems when considering sub-genres that are closely tied to it. For example, jazz fusion, a development of the 1970s, is perceived not to be jazz because it incorporates elements of rock and funk music – such as electric instruments, which include guitars and synthesisers – and employs a different rhythmic approach to conventional styles. Similarly, the avant-garde, which incorporates notions of free jazz, space jazz, and noise jazz - falls short because it often abandons the key element of swing, along with other fundamentals.²⁷⁸

These issues, however, have little impact on jazz from 1919-1929. The reason being that during this period the music relied on a formulaic rigidity. In turn, this rigidity principally gave rise to notions of specific rudiments and thus is the basis for the concept of a jazz tradition. From the mid-forties to the late sixties, discussions between musical commentators such as Sargeant, Hodeir, and Schuller argued what these fundamental elements of jazz were.²⁷⁹ Their discussions produced a process of definition that relied on the fulfilment of an inventory of specific musical qualities and techniques. In the main, jazz was seen to consist of a core of rhythms, melodies, scalar structures, blues derivation, harmony, aesthetics, and the

²⁷⁷ Scott DeVaux, Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography. *Black American Literature Forum*, Volume 25, Number 3 Published: Fall 1991

²⁷⁸ Daniel Hardle, *Jazz Historiography: The Story of Jazz History Writing* (iUniverse, 2013), 263.

²⁷⁹ Winthrop Sargeant, *Jazz: Hot and Hybrid* (London: The Jazz Book Club, 1959).

importance of improvisation as a subsidiary of these.²⁸⁰ Meeting all of these rudiments, jazz music produced during the aforementioned period can be considered the purest essence of the jazz tradition.

4.3. Can the Subaltern Play? Reading jazz as voice and narrative

Beginning in the 1970s and developing throughout much of the 1980s, musical scholars such as Anthony Newcomb,²⁸¹ Leo Treitler,²⁸² and Edward T. Cone²⁸³ have discussed the parallels between non-programmatic instrumental music and literature in eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century European art music.²⁸⁴ Such parallels built on the work of E.T.A. Hoffman, who in the early nineteenth century discussed the spiritual and mediated effects of Beethoven's music. However, whereas Hoffman was principally concerned with sublimity – i.e., the realm of the mighty and the immeasurable – Newcomb, Treitler, and Cone focused more on the notion of classical music as narrative.²⁸⁵ Similarly, Fred Everett Maus, and others including Nicholas Reyland,²⁸⁶ have argued that from Haydn and Mozart through to Brahms, music invites comparison to drama or narrative.²⁸⁷

In this respect, music has the capacity to affect, to move, and to conjure an array of feelings at different moments, including serenity or exuberance, regret or triumph, and fury

²⁸⁰ A. T. Jackson. cited in. M. Cooke., D. Horn., *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). 83.

²⁸¹ Anthony Newcomb, 'Once More "Between Absolute and Program Music": Schumann's Second Symphony', *19th Century Music*, Vol 7, No. 3. Essays for Joseph Kerman. Published: April 3, 1984. pp. 233-250.

²⁸² Leo Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1990).

²⁸³ Edward T. Cone, *Hearing and Knowing Music* (New Jersey: Princeton University, 2009).

²⁸⁴ Fred Everett Maus, 'Narrative, Drama, and Emotion in Instrumental Music', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 55, No. 3. Summer, 1997, pp. 293-303

²⁸⁵ Hoffman reserves his programmatic language not for the music's narrative, but for its general effect on sublimity. Beethoven's instrumental music, Hoffman claims, 'unveils before us the realm of the mighty and the immeasurable.' including a 'pain' in the listener 'in which love, hope, and joy are consumed without being destroyed'. E. T. A. Hoffmann, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana; The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 97.

²⁸⁶ Nicholas W. Reyland, *Zbigniew Preisner's Three Colors Trilogy: Blue, White, Red: A Film Score Guide* (New York: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 140-142.

²⁸⁷ Fred Everett Maus, *Humanism and Musical Experience* (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton, 1990). Copyright 1990 by Fred Everett Maus. 36-39.

Available Online:

<https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/3432/MausMusicAsNarrativeV12.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed: June 17, 2014.

or delight. In this context, musical composition, notably instrumental composition, has been referred to as ‘extra-musical’, which characterises it in much the same way that poetry is ‘extra-verbal’: i.e., setting a story, a play, an historical event, an encounter with nature, or even a painting program to music.²⁸⁸ In this respect, as Cone asserts, instrumental music has the potential to become language: the expression of thoughts, feelings, emotions, and meanings.²⁸⁹ Thus, it can be argued in the same way that words have emotional connotations so to do musical notes. Simply put, there is a distinguishable interchange between music and language, which conjures instances of parity.

The basis for this approach lies in the mid-nineteenth century dichotomy that existed between absolute and emergent programmatic music (*programm Musik*).²⁹⁰ The former, which can loosely be defined as instrumental, classicist, empirical and proto-formalist in nature was a music free of any explicit or implicit connection with, or reference to, extra-musical reality.²⁹¹ In contrast, programmatic music, coined by Hungarian composer Franz Liszt in 1855, marked, for critics like Hanslick and composers such as Johannes Brahms, a shift from rigidity, with weight placed on formlessness and the debasement of the purity of instrumental music.²⁹² Significantly, this shift, as Jonathan Kregor notes, ushered in the notion that language and music shared basic processing mechanisms.

The quest for understanding in this respect thus led Cone, Newcomb, Treitler and others in the 1970s and 1980s to apply linguistic theories to music, which include notions of generative grammar, semiotic analyses, and information theory.²⁹³ They argue that in a technical, strictly analytical framework, it can be argued that music is in its own right a specialised language. Mostly written, devised specifically for the discussion of musical forms,

²⁸⁸ Richard Elfy-Jones, *Music and the Numinous* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 76.

²⁸⁹ Lillian Eyre, ‘The Marriage of Music and Narrative: Explorations in Art, Therapy, and Research’, *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. Volume 7, Number 3. (2007).

²⁹⁰ Carl Dalhaus, *Nineteenth-century Music* (California: University of California Press, 1989), 34.

²⁹¹ Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2003), 1.

²⁹² Christopher John Murray, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850, Volume 2* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2004), 911.

²⁹³ Chris Dobrian, ‘Music and Language’. Published: 1993. Available at Christopher Dobrian Articles and Publications: <http://music.arts.uci.edu/dobrian/articles.htm>. Accessed: August 28, 2014.

it is a descriptive or explanatory language.²⁹⁴ Examples of this are prevalent in many musical styles, spread across various cultures. One of the most widely acknowledged examples is Western music, which has at its core a reliance on the five-line staff notation and twelve-note scales. Other instances can be considered computer-readable protocols such as MIDI file format,²⁹⁵ and more commonly guitar tablature. The latter predominantly uses six horizontal lines that represent the six strings of the guitar, upon which are placed numbers to indicate notes, and symbols to signify expressions and nuances such as the bending and muting of strings.²⁹⁶

Musicologist, Elizabeth Sara Paley has, through her work on incidental music in theatre and its links between music and language, fashioned distinct relations between textual narrative and classical or romantic instrumental music.²⁹⁷ These relations have led to one of the most important aspects of 'music as language', investigations into recurring elements in plots. Based on the ideas of literary theorists, such as Ernst Behler, Paley suggests that in concentrating on structure at the expense of character or representational detail, the shared qualities of music and narrative can be assessed in a particularly nuanced framework. In this respect, she appropriates Heinrich Schenker's 1979 work, *Free Composition*, which details plot structures for tonal music, presenting a list of 'obstacles, reverses, disappointments', and so on that enumerate, informally, events in musical plots.²⁹⁸

In the art of music, as in life, motion toward the goal encounters obstacles, reverses, disappointments, and involves great distances, detours, expansions, interpolations, and, in short, retardations of all kinds. Therein lies the source of all artistic delaying, from which the creative mind can derive content that is ever new. Thus, we hear in the middle-ground and foreground an almost dramatic course of events.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ Dale A. Olsen, *Popular Music of Vietnam: The Politics of Remembering, the Economics of Forgetting* (London: Routledge, 2008), 18.

²⁹⁵ Format 1 MIDI files consist of a header-chunk and one or more track-chunks, with all tracks being played simultaneously. The first track of a Format 1 file is special, and is also known as the 'Tempo Map'. It should contain all meta-events of the types Time Signature, and Set Tempo. 'The MIDI File Format: Chunks'. Available: www.csie.ntu.edu.tw/~r92092/ref/midi. Accessed: May 12, 2014.

²⁹⁶ Howard Morgen, *Howard Morgen's Solo Guitar: Insights, Arranging Techniques & Classic Jazz Standards* (New York: Alfred Music, 2000), 132.

²⁹⁷ Elizabeth Sara Paley, *Narratives of "incidental" Music in German Romantic Theater* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin--Madison, 1998), 34.

²⁹⁸ Heinrich Schenker, Ernst Oster ed., *Free Composition: Volume III of New Musical Theories and Fantasies* (Maesteg: Pendragon Press, 1979), 5.

²⁹⁹ Heinrich Schenker, Ernst Oster ed., *Free Composition: Volume III of New Musical Theories and Fantasies* (Maesteg: Pendragon Press, 1979), 5.

This approach has at its core a dependency on the notion that music and narrative both involve a succession of events in a regular order, or rather that music and narrative present events hierarchically.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, and arguably more important here, is the capacity in this respect, of music to express the often inexpressible.³⁰¹ For example, in the sphere of classical music, which shares some similarities with jazz, many of the compositional works of Beethoven, Mahler and especially Shostakovich (see Symphony 8: often entitled ‘the Stalingrad Symphony’, which purportedly serves as a memorial to those killed in that battle)³⁰² mirrored the panorama of the world around them whilst simultaneously capturing some of the conflicts and resulting changes that underlied great historical events.³⁰³

The phenomenon of music is given to us with the sole purpose of establishing an order of things, including particularly the coordination between man and time. To be put into practice, its indispensable and single requirement is construction....It is precisely this construction, this achieved order, which produces in us a unique emotion having nothing in common with our ordinary sensations and our responses to the impressions of daily life.³⁰⁴

Within the context of jazz, however, this poses a particular problem because the music has as a key element, improvisation: ‘the creative activity of immediate (in the moment) musical composition, which combines performance with communication of emotions and instrumental technique as well as spontaneous response to other musicians’.³⁰⁵ Thus, locating readable patterns of structured and purposefully developed music to analyse in this context is a difficult task, but nonetheless possible. For example, Duke Ellington regularly veered between the lines of jazz *improviso* and musical composer: many of his early works

³⁰⁰ Fred Everett Maus, *Humanism and Musical Experience* (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton, 1990). Copyright 1990 by Fred Everett Maus. 36.

Available Online:

<https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/3432/MausMusicAsNarrativeV12.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed: June 17, 2014.

³⁰¹ John Michael Cooper, *Historical Dictionary of Romantic Music* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 292.

³⁰² Derek C. Hulme, *Dmitri Shostakovich Catalogue: The First Hundred Years and Beyond* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 261.

³⁰³ Chafe, *The Tragic and the Ecstatic: The Musical Revolution of Wagner's Tristan and Isolde* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 24.

³⁰⁴ Igor Stravinsky in Burton Raffel, *Artists All: Creativity, the University, and the World* (Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2010), 98.

³⁰⁵ Sujatha Ganesan, ‘Is the improvisation of a musical work itself protected by copyright? (Detailed Answer for USA)’, Knowledge Base Copyright Law (KB:Law|©), Answer No. 180, Published: July 27, 2009 Available: <http://kb-law.info/kbc/kbc.php?article=180&land=US&lang=EN&mode=1>. Accessed: June 24, 2014.

have defined and hierarchically structured patterns, which is why he is often considered to be a jazz composer in the classical sense of the word.

The foundations for reading jazz as narrative and voice can be found in ideas that jazz theorist, Edward O. Bland³⁰⁶ and composer, Leonard Bernstein were discussing in the 1950s. Both approached the concept of black jazz as more than merely an art form of musical elements. Both interpreted it in a similar metaphorical and narrative framework as that used by Hoffman to investigate the links between narrative and classical music.³⁰⁷ Bland and Bernstein both place much emphasis on the rhythm of early jazz. More precisely, they focused on swinging rhythms, which in short, consists of a subdivision of each single beat into triplets.³⁰⁸ This component was integral to the jazz sound of the 1920s and separated it from other musical forms.³⁰⁹ Previous convention and much classical music often divided the beat into groups of two, or as it is more commonly known, ‘a straight rhythm’. American dhol player, Sunny Jain asserts that ‘The triplet is the basis for the jazz rhythm and feel’.³¹⁰

In this respect, Bland³¹¹ and Bernstein,³¹² along with legendary stride pianist Luther G. Williams suggest that jazz was a mobile thing, conceived in transit.³¹³ A progressive art form, according to Bland and Williams, the jazz sound and its integral rhythm was refined in cattle carts over many years as slave workers sang gospel hymns and experimented with blues tempos while being transported to and from cornfields and factories. In this way, ‘The steady beat of the left hand (in jazz)³¹⁴ echoed the rhythm of the factory, machine, and train, but the unexpected accents by the right hand, as well as the fast-paced melodies, announced a refusal to be contained by that steadiness’,³¹⁵ supporting the notion of jazz as a form of metaphorical

³⁰⁶ The Cry of Jazz, directed by John Schlesinger (1959: KHTB Productions, 2004), DVD.

³⁰⁷ Paul Lair, Leonard Bernstein: *A Guide to Research* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 36.

³⁰⁸ Marilyn Barnes-Ostrander, *Music, Reflections in Sound* (Vancouver: Canfield Press, 1976), 324.

³⁰⁹ Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 316.

³¹⁰ Sunny Jain, *The total jazz drummer: a fun and comprehensive overview of jazz drumming* (Los Angeles: Alfred Music Publishing, 2007), 10.

³¹¹ The Cry of Jazz, directed by John Schlesinger (1959: KHTB Productions, 2004), DVD.

³¹² Leonard Bernstein, *The Infinite Variety of Music* (Cleckheaton: Amadeus Press, 2007), 64.

³¹³ *The Cry of Jazz*, Directed by Edward O. Bland. 1959. Osmund Music, 2000, DVD.

³¹⁴ Ragtime — also spelled rag-time or rag time — is a musical genre; the precursor to jazz: bearing the cardinal trait of syncopated (or ragged) rhythm. It enjoyed its peak popularity between 1895 and 1918.

³¹⁵ Cited in J. Hubbard-Brown., *Scott Joplin: Composer* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009). 12.

rebellion. By analysing this convention through an appropriated portal of close reading interwoven with musicological reflection, this rhythm takes on a metaphorical significance that draws on the three key elements of jazz analysis: traditional elements, social functions, and history.

In addition, Bernstein stipulated that the tone-colours of jazz – i.e., its exclusive sound values – (while many) are predominantly derivative of the Negro singing voice.³¹⁶ The saxophone, he adds, ‘is almost a perfect imitation in instrumental terms of this quality: a little hoarse, breathy, and with vibrato—a slight tremor’.³¹⁷ Therefore, if Ellington was the heartbeat of a social critique through musical expression, or as Albert Murray puts it the foundations beneath the ‘transformation of the American Negro experience’, then his backing musicians, were the orators of his criticisms and protests. The Ellington musical collective, to use the words of Toni Morrison, through their artistry assured that history became a garment they could wear and share, and not a cloak in which to hide.³¹⁸

As early as 1928, under the guise of the Washingtonians, Ellington, backed by Carney and Hodges can be heard on songs like *The Mooche* stylistically expressing the richly vivid details of black life. Through menacing sonority, distinct growling trumpets, and chromatic harmonies all underpinned by an unusual (example, 24 bar AAB) structures, such richness encompassed many later Ellington works, including *The Deep Blue South Suite* and *Harlem Airshaft*. Ellington’s ability to craft a distinctive musical mood to tell a story through his band has left an indelible history in composition. His work presents what Bland referred to as the ‘hazards of being Negro’ and the desire to overcome these hazards.³¹⁹ In this sense, the performativity of this early yet accomplished work is the ‘musical expression of the triumph of the Negro spirit’.³²⁰ As Ellington himself asserted in 1931:

³¹⁶ Leonard Bernstein in *The World of Jazz - Leonard Bernstein: Omnibus - The Historic TV Broadcasts*, Directed by Alastair Cooke (E1 Entertainment, 2010; Original 195), DVD.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Toni Morrison in Paul Finkleman, *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-first Century - Five-volume Set* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 494.

³¹⁹ *The Cry of Jazz*, directed by John Schlesinger (1959: KHTB Productions, 2004), DVD.

³²⁰ Ibid.

'I contend that the Negro is the creative voice of America, is creative America, and it was a happy day in America when the first unhappy slave was landed on its shores...it is our voice that sang "America" when America grew too lazy satisfied and confident to sing.'³²¹

The significance of the contributions made by Ellington's band to his jazz, and ultimately as such jazz outright, goes far beyond the immediate value of hearing their nuanced musical abilities. Through their artisanship, they contributed to the committed action of Ellington to give a voice to African-Americans from the stage during a period of unremitting dialogic constraints. As Ellington noted, 'For a long time, social protest and pride in the Negro have been the most significant things in what we've done. In that music we have been telling for a long time, what it is to be a Negro in this country'.³²² In this context black music aspired to the condition of language and the musical performances of its players can be seen to have possessed a malleability that enabled it to speak, especially to and for a subjugated people.

By 1931, Ellington and company had all but transformed the jazz sound from the narrow frame of 78-rpm recordings that were limited to three minutes to more elongated, experimental pieces. *Creole Rhapsody*, which builds significantly upon the foundations laid by *The Mooche* is a clear reflection of Ellington's growing need to express himself in ever larger forms and on a broader scope, articulating the growing stature of the African-American voice as a vanguard means of communication. As Nat Hentoff states, these works are universal expressions of the black American experience. Murray adds:

I don't think anybody has achieved a higher synthesis of the American experience than Duke Ellington. Anybody who achieved a literary equivalent of that would be beyond Melville, Henry James, and Faulkner. He transformed the experience of American Negroes... in the actual texture of all human existence, not only in the United States but in all places throughout the ages.³²³

Connected to the emergent black cultural nationalism movement that developed in cities such as New York, New Orleans, and Chicago in the first half of the twentieth century, jazz was a music forged in protest. The avowed objective of the dramatic innovations that musicians like Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and, alongside them, Willy Smith, Benny

³²¹ Duke Ellington in T. C. W. Blanning, *The Triumph of Music: The Rise of Composers, Musicians and Their Art* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 301.

³²² Duke Ellington in Nat Hentoff, *American Music Is* (Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 2004), 73.

³²³ Nat Hentoff, *American Music Is* (Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 2004), 75.

Carter, Coleman Hawkins, Cab Calloway, Chick Webb, Clarence Williams, Earl Hines and more practiced throughout the 1920s was to develop jazz into a medium of spiritual utility and protest. In this respect, these musicians sought to develop the music's identity, which had been under-construction since the Buddy Bolden years.

When Ellington and company abandoned an adherence to structured progressions, design, and moved beyond the limitations of accepted rpm parameters, tempos and voice-like timbres, they were very deliberately creating a unique canon of artistic expression that was at its core vanguard and in its purpose developing as a form of opposition to hegemonic dominance along the margins of culture. And thus, the actions of these musicians can be seen to have equated to a language of expression built upon the notion of improvised performative protest—a continuation of the African-American desire to voice silence through music. In this context, therefore, jazz should be considered as something more than just a musical art form for the purposes of entertainment.

In this respect, focus should be on its 'social context' just as much as its identifying rubrics of varying rhythms, harmonies, melodies and timbres. After all, jazz history is a history of collective activity. As sociologists Irving Horowitz and Charles Nanry stated, behind (jazz) definition 'there are ideologies, especially of cultural and racial politics'.³²⁴ Therefore, what I propose in this dissertation is not simply a definition but an approach to understanding the music. This approach encompasses both the fundamental elements of jazz music as voice, whilst also analysing the multi-dimensional, socio-cultural contexts of the periods in which it was played. In this sense, historical contexts and the music's internal aesthetic are held in equal relation.

Jazz, both in a musical and a social sense, is historically transient. In short, it is an ever-evolving art form that continually seeks new connections – social, political, and cultural – that provide creative outlets. As sixties jazz saxophonist Archie Shepp remarked, 'Jazz is a music itself born out of oppression, born out of the enslavement of my people. It is precisely

³²⁴ Nat Hentoff, *American Music Is* (Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 2004), 75.

that'.³²⁵ Therefore, jazz can be seen as a socially progressive form of realism that goes beyond the fusing of particular instruments and the production of a distinguishable sound. Jazz music is steady rebellion, both in terms of its players and its unrestrictive compositional rubrics. In the grander context of jazz composition, its early formations were an uprising against subordination and servitude, and its modern variations (such as jazz rap, jazz metal, noise-jazz) are, to some extent, 'a rebellion against the popular and the commercial—a committed claim to the legitimacy of a pure and authentic art'.³²⁶

In considering Boston jazz from 1919-1929 as narrative, this approach not only draws the city's black musicians, many of whom operated as sidemen, from the shadows of accompaniment, it also revises their historical significance by transforming their inimitable playing styles into a distinct language that underpins a largely unheard voice of resistance and protest against subordination. In doing so, this approach readdresses the significance of black culture in the city, and intertwines black opposition into the widely-considered fabric of developing local power struggles. As the history books show, discussions of this nature have thus far been dominated by the dynamic between the city's Brahmin class and emergent Irish, with little consideration paid to the ways in which this dynamic impeded the abilities of blacks to generate social mobility and be heard during a period of strained national race relations.

³²⁵ A. Heble., *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, Dissonance and Critical Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013). 60.

³²⁶ N. Brown, I. Szeman., *Pierre Bourdieu: Fieldwork in Culture* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). 165.

Chapter Three: Contextualising the Past - Boston, Massachusetts and the Year of Disillusionment

1. Introduction

On January 2, 1919, Calvin Coolidge stood before the joint gathering in the Massachusetts House Chamber, situated down the hall from where he had served for five years as President of the State's Senate, to take the oath as Governor.³²⁷ In his first address to the General Court as Governor, he spoke candidly of the need to move on from 'the autocratic methods of war' (World War I was little over five months past) to the 'democratic methods of peace', and the necessity for stability (both economically and socially), not just in Massachusetts but also across America.³²⁸ Within five years, Coolidge would ascend to the highest plateau of American politics, serving as the country's thirtieth President, but those years were seldom peaceful and never truly stable. Rather, by the time Coolidge stepped down from the presidency on March 4, 1929, he had in one form or another overseen one of the most difficult decades in America's history.³²⁹

³²⁷ The White House, 'History & Grounds: Presidents – 30. Calvin Coolidge'. Available: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/1600/presidents/calvincoolidge>. Accessed: July 12, 2015.

³²⁸ Boston Public Library. Nonfiction. BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # J87 .M417 1919. Massachusetts. Governor (Calvin Coolidge), *Messages to the General Court, Official Addresses, Proclamations and State Papers of His Excellency Governor Calvin Coolidge for the Years Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen and Nineteen Hundred and Twenty* (Massachusetts: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1920), 190.

³²⁹ Coolidge is often written about as a weak president. After a promising early political career, he assumed the presidency upon the death of Warren Harding. But a year later, the death of his sixteen years old son, Calvin Jr. overwhelmed him with grief and he lost interest in politics. It has been suggested by Robert E. Gilbert that Coolidge showed distinct signs of clinical depression and that he served out his presidency a broken man. Robert E. Gilbert, *The Tormented President: Calvin Coolidge, Death, and Clinical Depression* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 30.



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Figure 3.1: Calvin Coolidge faces the joint gathering, and his father, who is conspicuously seated to the right of the podium.

Synonymous with language that depicts the era as a time of prosperity, extravagance, and lavish excess, ‘the Roaring Twenties’³³¹ (or as it is also known, ‘the Dollar Decade’)³³² was a time like no other in American history. In the furore of post-war optimism, factions of the country were swept along by a wave of reckless consumerism, expression, and vigour underpinned by a new and young cosmopolitan, urban populace. However, older citizens felt not only cynicism but also uncertainty about this new America,³³³ fearing that traditions such as morality, social refinement, and cultural sophistication were rapidly slipping away.³³⁴ As such, they clung to memories of simpler times, ‘when life was slower, when values were more certain, and when betrayal was not just around the corner’.³³⁵ In doing so, elder Americans adhered to the age-old mantra of prosperity for everyone who worked hard. And in these

³³⁰ Calvin Coolidge (1873-1933) taking the oath of office as Governor of the State Senate, 1st January 1919 (b/w photo), American Photographer, (20th century) / American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA / Bridgeman Images. Image number: AQS254834. Available: <http://www.bridgemanimages.com/en-GB/lightbox/temporary/asset/254834/add>. Accessed: July 1, 2015.

³³¹ The 1920s in the United States is often referred to as ‘roaring’ because of the exuberant popular culture of the decade.

³³² The 1920s were labelled the ‘Dollar Decade’ because it was an era of unprecedented prosperity.

³³³ This America, as Michael J. O’Neil asserts was viewed as ‘moralistic, vulgar, and devoted to business and making money’. Michael J. O’Neil, *America in The 1920s* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 30.

³³⁴ Ted Merwin, *In Their Own Image: New York Jews in Jazz Age Popular Culture* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 147.

³³⁵ William C. Spragens, *Popular Images of American Presidents* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1988), 306.

perceived difficult times above all else they sought strong leadership; a leader who came from the people and who shared their ideals. As William C. Spragens notes,

They wanted strong leaders who did not merely play politics-as-usual, but who could lead them through troubled times. The presence of Calvin Coolidge in the White House told them that their dreams could become reality.³³⁶

While disenchantment with the increased tempo and youthfulness of post-war American life (including newfangled credit-creating habits and glitzy ostentation) created a generational gap, the strains of political and social upheaval were far more damaging. Central to this was the Red Scare, a socialist (worker) revolution backed by the perceived political radicalism of Eastern European immigrants that posed what was perceived to be a more universal threat to the freedom of all Americans.³³⁷ Recession, revolts, terrorist attacks, worker strikes, racial violence, and widespread unemployment all swiftly followed the end of World War I, and all played a significant part in creating notions of fear amongst the population.³³⁸ This fear soon morphed into paranoia and gave rise to a cynicism that rendered anyone – mill worker, novelist, playwright, journalist, musician, social critic and more – who dared call into question American ideals and traditional values a figure to be feared and ultimately suppressed.³³⁹ This affected those at the forefront of cultural America (Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald all fled to France)³⁴⁰ and more significantly racial minorities and foreign nationals, including Jewish masses from Eastern Europe and Russia, who felt compelled to sacrifice their rich, ethnic traditions.³⁴¹

Arguably, no other period in American history was quite as complex as 1919 to 1929. And in a microcosmic sense, no city epitomised the complexities of this period quite like

³³⁶ William C. Spragens, *Popular Images of American Presidents* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1988), 306.

³³⁷ W. Anthony Gengarely, *Distinguished Dissenters and Opposition to the 1919-1920 Red Scare* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), 90.

³³⁸ Boston Public Library. MBLN Central. Microfilm - 1896-1941. Call # News-paper. No Author Attributed, 'Comb City for Alleged Radicals: Five Men are Sent to Boston', *The Lowell Sun, Mass.* Published: January 3, 1920. Page. 1.

³³⁹ James Ciment, Thaddeus Russell, *The Home Front Encyclopedia: United States, Britain, and Canada in World Wars I and II, Volume 1* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 338.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Harvard University Library. Andover-Harvard. Theology; Harvard Depository. Call # 238.5. American Jewish Committee. Research Institute on Peace and Post-War Problems, *Jewish Post-war Problems: A Study Course, Issues 1-8* (American Jewish Committee, Research Institute on Peace and Post-War Problems, 1943), 43-45.

Boston, Massachusetts. For while turmoil and a general sense of insecurity and fear dogged much of the country, Boston experienced some of the most notable and certainly the most testing events of the time, including anarchist bombings, a cascade of racially-motivated mob attacks, as well as consistent worker protests, including the now infamous Boston Police Strike of September 1919.³⁴² When Coolidge stood before the joint gathering in the Massachusetts House Chamber on January 2, 1919, he took the oath to govern a city about to experience a decade of unpredictable social, political, and economic transition that lent itself more to social upheaval than social uplift.

For blacks in the city of Boston, turmoil and transition rarely presented itself as an opportunity for mobilisation and betterment. While political wrangling and an unsettled labour market fostered disenfranchisement amongst whites from the city's highest echelons right down to the working classes and unsettled its dominant frameworks of power, blacks remained largely powerless and thus subjugated. In actuality, a consequence of the aforementioned instability was that authoritarianism in Boston was ramped up to new heights, which served to reaffirm notions of subordination and the need for order.³⁴³ Such authoritarianism used the promotion of fear via constructs such as the Red Scare, principally a media-led assault on civil liberties and the American left, to reaffirm capitalist white superiority through the initiated suppression of America's immigrant and non-white working classes. This assault included a seemingly undefined yet ostensibly ubiquitous form of black Bolshevism.³⁴⁴ In the loosest sense of the term, this equated to any form of leftist leaning amongst the black population, or any criticism of white supremacy in action.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Boston Public Library. MBLN Central. Microtext. Call #: AN2 .M4B666. No Author Attributed. 'Police Vote to Strike Tonight. Walkout at 5:45 P.M. Rollcall. *The Boston Post*. Published: September 9, 1919. Page. 1.

³⁴³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # E185.5. A43 multi vols. William N. Jones., Day By Day: A Negro Movement Towards Communism, *The Afro American*. Published: August 15, 1925. P. 16.

³⁴⁴ *The 'Jazz Age'* itself was partially a media and literary creation, born of ideas and social reflections in fictionalised accounts and narratives. F. Scott Fitzgerald's romanticised novel, *This Side of Paradise* (1920) about affluent post-war youth is a particular example. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

³⁴⁵ Elizabeth Betita Martinez, *We Have Not Been Moved: Resisting Racism and Militarism in 21st Century America* (Oakland: PM Press, 2012), 231.

Despite ongoing colour prejudice across America, including lynching, disenfranchisement, and segregation, all of which shadowed the deeper reaches of economic inequality, blacks had rarely sought to sanction racial lines in labour circles. However, the emergence of communism throughout the world suggested to some whites, J. Edgar Hoover included, that exploited workers of all races and nations harboured the potential for revolution.³⁴⁶ Such scaremongering coincided with Hoover's emergence as the engineer of 'capitalist white supremacist policing' as he willingly served as technocratic overseer for many of the 1919 actions.³⁴⁷ One such by-product of growing racial tension in America was the spectacular growth of the revived Ku Klux Klan. Feeding off racial anxiety, such as that being propagated by Hoover, the Klan (inactive for decades) re-emerged to block many immigrants from entering the country.³⁴⁸

Hoover's brand of policing and the actions of the Klan also coincided with a growing awareness amongst black worker factions, and the American media, of the effect of Anglo-American organisation on the inability of blacks to make inroads in white-dominated worker unions. But while this situation did motivate some blacks to pursue change through more radical (i.e., militant) channels akin to the actions of aggressive Italian and Eastern European socialist factions, there were no substantial connections with the movement.³⁴⁹ In a general respect, this was largely because the most influential post-war blacks, such as educator and lecturer, John Wesley Edward Bowen were principally in the process of developing independent conditions for cultural, social, and political uplift, with many blacks finding much potential in the embryonic 'New Negro' of Harlem, New York.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶ Holger Weiss, *Framing a Radical African Atlantic: African American Agency, West African Intellectuals and the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 31-35.

³⁴⁷ Elizabeth Betita Martinez, *We Have Not Been Moved: Resisting Racism and Militarism in 21st Century America* (Oakland: PM Press, 2012), 231.

³⁴⁸ Roger Crownover, *The United States Intervention in North Russia, 1918, 1919: The Polar Bear Odyssey* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 96.

³⁴⁹ John Arthur Garraty, Mark Christopher Carnes, *American National Biography, Volume 18* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 117-120

³⁵⁰ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # HV7578. B6. J. W. E. Bowen in No Author Attributed, NEGRO DAY AT THE EXPOSITION; The Colored People Gather in Great Numbers at Atlanta -- An Impressive Address. *The New York Times*. Published October 22, 1895. Page 5.

While the idea of the ‘New Negro’ originated in the late nineteenth century (it was first mentioned in an 1895 Cleveland Gazette editorial celebrating the passing of the New York Civil Rights Law) it began to amass real significance in Harlem from 1919 onwards.³⁵¹ It was there that black literature and music began to dismantle and counteract negative stereotypes and replaced them with images of the developing ‘New Negro’.³⁵² This innovative approach to being black was underpinned by a desire to move away from the enslavement and disenfranchisement of their ancestors and instead legitimise their place in American society by demanding that their rights as citizens be vouched for by law.³⁵³ By 1919, the ‘New Negroes’ sought to be recognised for their education and refinement (for example, the ability to speak the language of their Anglo-American counterparts) as well as their money, with property rights strongly implied as the hallmark of those with the capacity to demand their political rights.³⁵⁴ All of this represented a modern black self-confidence and an active refusal to obey post-World War I white oppression (principally Jim Crow laws).³⁵⁵

However, in the wake of such perceived advancements, a distance between the ‘Old’ established Negro and the ‘New’ developed. In cities such as Boston, New York, and Chicago for example, the Old Negro existed within the labyrinthine memory of black enslavement and believed uplift only possible when sought in interracial alliance with whites.³⁵⁶ In contrast, the New Negro was a spontaneously generated and sufficient self-black citizen who was inclined to bring about change through cultural influence, education,³⁵⁷ and if necessary, militancy (i.e.,

³⁵¹ Cary D. Wintz, Paul Finkelman, *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance: K-Y* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2004), 892-894.

³⁵² Alain Locke, *The New Negro* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1925).

³⁵³ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # HV7578. B6. J. W. E. Bowen in No Author Attributed, NEGRO DAY AT THE EXPOSITION; The Colored People Gather in Great Numbers at Atlanta -- An Impressive Address. *The New York Times*. Published October 22, 1895. Page 5.

³⁵⁴ Shelly Eversley, *The Real Negro: The Question of Authenticity in Twentieth-Century African American Literature* (London: Routledge, 2004), 25.

³⁵⁵ Enacted after the Reconstruction period in the Southern United States, Jim Crow laws were state and local decrees enforcing racial segregation. These laws were adopted in part in many northern states and continued in force until 1965.

³⁵⁶ William J. Maxwell, *New Negro, Old Left: African-American Writing and Communism Between the Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

³⁵⁷ Anna Pochmara, *The Making of the New Negro: Black Authorship, Masculinity, and Sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 62.

the firing of guns).³⁵⁸ In the broader sense of black American life, the dichotomy of new versus old transcended defined generational, class, and geographical boundaries. It was a dynamic that pitted free citizens against slaves, the educated minority against the illiterate masses, the urban against the rural, and the embryonic North against the well-established South.³⁵⁹

While at times the New and Old were fused, for the most part they remained divided. In fact, black American educator, writer, and philosopher, Alain Locke went as far as to construct the 'New Negro primarily through a confrontation with the old'.³⁶⁰ The main characteristic of this confrontation, simply put, was the shift 'from passive submission (to the dominant culture of whites) to dynamic agency'.³⁶¹ This shift is perhaps best expressed by the standoff that developed in Boston between early twentieth-century civil rights activists, William Monroe Trotter and educator, author, and orator, Booker T. Washington.³⁶² While the latter and his followers pursued racially conciliatory policies, which amounted to blacks showing themselves to be productive members of white-dominated society (for example, through the promotion of manual training), Trotter opposed all forms of racial discrimination, segregation, and subordination and called for a renewed emphasis on traditional forms of education such as liberal arts.³⁶³

While the New Negro in Boston did establish some form of social autonomy by 1919, the city's black race as a whole failed to enact significant change. This was principally because of divisions such as the one between Trotter and Washington split the small black population of the city: as previously noted, 16,350 in 1920 - a mere 2% of Boston's overall population.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸ Martha Jade Nadell, *Enter the New Negroes: Images of Race in American Culture* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004), 11.

³⁵⁹ Sherita L. Johnson, *Black Women in New South Literature and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2009), Contents.

³⁶⁰ Anna Pochmara, *The Making of the New Negro: Black Authorship, Masculinity, and Sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 62.

³⁶¹ Alain Locke, *The New Negro* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1925).

³⁶² Booker T. Washington, Louis R. Harlan, *The Booker T. Washington Papers: 1903-4* (University of Illinois Press, 1977), 258.

³⁶³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'NEGRO QUESTION IN BOSTON: Subject of Conference at the Twentieth Century Club--Greatest Bar to Advancement Cited'. *The Boston Globe*. Published: Mar 21, 1907. Page: 16.

³⁶⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # HA431. A3. 1920x. Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Volume III Population - Country of Birth for the Foreign-Born White, for the State and Principal Cities 1920. Page 437.

Such division, during a time when the Red Scare had nurtured a climate of increased racial hostility, only served to intensify fragmentation. Unable to sufficiently organise itself in a manner that allowed for the best possible conditions to counteract political, economic, and labour struggles, blacks in Boston found themselves almost directionless. While other cities such as New York did experience similar issues, their 152, 467 black residents could withstand division; the New Negro collective there was able to conjure enough support to oppose sanctions, oppression, and the unsympathetic post-war climate.³⁶⁵

This chapter analyses the ways in which the Red Scare, riots, and worker strikes during 1919 contributed to the development of racism towards and the subordination of blacks in Boston over a period of ten years. It is my contention that the city developed a synergy between anti-communist causes, including the media, and racist forces, which gave rise to an imagined form of black Bolshevism. While fear of a foreign, evil empire, in this case Soviet conceptions of socialism, was the rationale for the Red Scare, what transpired in Boston was effectively a witch-hunt that sought to neutralise the entire left, which naturally included blacks and amongst them leading figures who sought to assail racial injustice.³⁶⁶ The Red Scare in Boston was accompanied by a quasi-vigilante crusade against books, the burlesque, and other cultural forms led by the Watch and Ward society, that equated to a new form of Puritanism.³⁶⁷

Moreover, this assault on the left coincided with a change in approach towards its blacks by State Congress and more importantly the Brahmin class. In particular, the latter slowly retreated from their dedication to the principles of racial equality that had been instilled by Brahmins before them such as Garrison, Philips, and Emerson. Instead, the Brahmins of the time adopted the national attitude of codified fear and hostility towards blacks.³⁶⁸ Thus, as the turbulent spring of 1919 gave way, black Boston faced its own 'Red Summer', so

³⁶⁵ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 4.

³⁶⁶ Fred Jerome, Roger Taylor, *Einstein on Race and Racism* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 122-3.

³⁶⁷ Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward Society's Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010).

³⁶⁸ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow, 1890-1920* (New England: UPNE, 1997), 42-3.

appropriated from the idea of black poet, James Weldon Johnson,³⁶⁹ who used the term to refer to bloodshed rather than political conflict.³⁷⁰ For in their isolated position in the South End of the city and with little means of establishing a voice amidst the competing narratives of political transition, social change, and ideological doctrine, the black position during 1919 simply became one of preservation rather than elevation, and this position remained the status quo for much of the twenties.

2. 1919: a year of violence and disillusion that defined a Decade

Thirteen days after his opening address as Governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge faced his first test in office, and arguably one of the most bizarre disasters in American history. During an unseasonably warm afternoon at around 12:30 pm on January 15, 1919, a full-to-capacity storage tank - 50 feet-high, and 90 feet in diameter - belonging to the Purity Distilling Company (a Massachusetts-based chemical firm) burst at 529 Commercial Street in the North End of Boston.³⁷¹ In doing so, the tank unleashed 2,300,000 gallons of molasses, which quickly morphed into a 15 foot high and 160 foot wide dense black wave that tore through the heavily populated area at a speed of 35 mph.³⁷² As it did so, it levelled the entire waterfront, which at the time boasted several commercial outlets and a number of neighbourhood tenements.³⁷³

Amongst the devastation, which also included elevated rail tracks, and the three-storey Engine 31 Fire House, were various animals (notably several horses and dogs), and 21 dead, including two children of ten years; 150 people were also injured.³⁷⁴ As one reporter noted the next day:

³⁶⁹ ...and member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

³⁷⁰ James Weldon Johnson, Sondra K. Wilson, *The Selected Writings of James Weldon Johnson: The New York Age editorials (1914-1923)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 53.

³⁷¹ Boston Public Library. Periodical; BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # PER 4010A.449. No author listed, '1919: The Great Molasses Flood'. *The Journal of the Engineering Institute of Canada*. Volume 2. Published 1919. p. 719.

³⁷² Molasses was often fermented to produce rum and ethanol. It was an active ingredient in alcoholic beverages and a key component of industrial cleaners and the production of munitions.

³⁷³ Boston Public Library. MBLN Central. Microtext. Call #: AN2 .M4B666. No Author Attributed, 'Huge Molasses Tank Explodes in North End; 11 Dead, 50 Hurt'. *The Boston Post*. Published: January 16, 1919. Page 1.

³⁷⁴ Lauralice de Campos Franceschini Canale, George E. Totten, Rafael A. Mesquita, ed., *Failure Analysis of Heat Treated Steel Components* (Ohio: ASM International, 2008), 57.

Molasses, waist deep, covered the street, swirled, and bubbled about the wreckage. Here and there struggled a form, whether it was animal or human being was impossible to tell. Only an upheaval, a thrashing about in the sticky mass, showed where any life was ... Horses died like so many flies on sticky flypaper. The more they struggled, the deeper in the mess they were ensnared. Human beings — men and women — suffered likewise.³⁷⁵

While molasses had been a cornerstone of the Boston economy since the colonial era, the city had never had to undertake its clean up on such a large-scale. Crews were deployed en-masse to attend to the gooey substance, first trying to dilute and flush it from the streets using water hydrants.³⁷⁶ When these proved ineffectual, fireboats showered the substance with salt water, which thinned it and eventually ran it into the Boston Harbor.³⁷⁷ For weeks thereafter workers tracked molasses, pumping it from cellars, basements, and the ground floors of an array of buildings.³⁷⁸ To the present day, some residents of the city's North End insist that on hot afternoons the local air is tinged with the feint, cloying scent of molasses.³⁷⁹

But the true legacy of the Great Molasses Flood lies in the financial impact it had on Boston. In terms of the damage alone, the cost exceeded \$100 million in today's money. Furthermore, the flood brought with it one-hundred-and-twenty-five lawsuits against the United States Industrial Alcohol Company (USIAC) and a legal battle that lasted over six years.³⁸⁰ The court eventually ruled in favour of the plaintiffs, asserting that the tank had been considerably overfilled and was for all intents and purposes not structurally sound.³⁸¹ Despite the conclusion of the court, however, speculation remained rife. While some experts claimed the molasses spill was sabotage, committed by business rivals, the USAIC placed blame on

³⁷⁵ Austin Frakt, 'Death by Molasses', *Washington Monthly*. Published: June 25, 2012. Available online: http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/ten-miles-square/2012/06/death_by_molasses038153.php. Accessed: June 12, 2015.

³⁷⁶ Ballard C. Campbell, *Disaster, Accidents, and Crises in American History: A Reference Guide to the Nation's Most Catastrophic Events* (New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2008), 1918.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 1918-9.

³⁷⁸ Harvard University Library. Cabot Science. Call # ENG 1253.4 (In storage. Consult Circ. desk). National Fire Protection Association, 'Subjects Covered in the Printed Records'. *Quarterly of the National Fire Protection Association*, Volume 30, Issue 3. 12-13.

³⁷⁹ Linda S. Hjorth, *Technology and Society: A Bridge to the 21st Century*. (Prentice Hall, 2003), 221-3.

³⁸⁰ Boston Public Library. Periodicals. Call # PER AP2.Y25. John Mason, 'The Molasses Flood of January 15, 1919 Remembered' *Yankee Magazine*, January 1965. 13-15.

³⁸¹ Charles H. Eccleston, *The EIS Book: Managing and Preparing Environmental Impact Statements* (CRC Press, 2013), 234-5.

anarchistic factions.³⁸² The company alleged that Boston's North End, which was largely populated by Italian immigrants and Irish-Americans, was an incubator for political radicalism. The aforementioned were considered by political factions and the media in the city to be anti-organisational leftists who advocated direct action, including terrorist violence, in their quest to overthrow the American government.³⁸³



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Figure 3.2 -Panorama of the Molasses Disaster site: 'Word of the disaster quickly brought every available rescue agency to the scene. Police, firemen, Red Cross workers, civilian volunteers, and cadets from the USS Nantucket training ship berthed nearby were soon on the site.'³⁸⁵

While Boston in 1919 was truly insular and parochial, it was also much like all major cities across America, recovering from the fallout of World War I. Price inflation and the cost of living had increased far beyond wages. Returning soldiers flooded the labour market; and as factories switched to peacetime production, existing workers sought to renegotiate salaries that had been frozen to help finance the war effort.³⁸⁶ As general labour strikes and protests became commonplace across the country, approximately one in every seven workers went

³⁸² Charles H. Eccleston, *The EIS Book: Managing and Preparing Environmental Impact Statements* (CRC Press, 2013), 234-5.

³⁸³ Kenneth E. Hendrickson, III, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in World History, Volume 3* (Washington DC: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 392.

³⁸⁴ Boston Public Library. MBLN Central. Microtext. Call #: AN2 .M4B666. No Author Attributed, 'Huge Molasses Tank Explodes in North End; 11 Dead, 50 Hurt'. *The Boston Post*. Published: January 16, 1919. Page 1.

³⁸⁵ Peter Schworm, 'Nearly a century later, structural flaw in molasses tank revealed' *The Boston Globe*. Published: January 14, 2015.

Available online: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/01/14/nearly-century-later-new-insight-into-cause-great-molasses-flood/CNqLYcoT58kNo3MxP872iM/story.html>. Accessed: June 12, 2015.

³⁸⁶ Beverley Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 27.

on strike during the year,³⁸⁷ persistent unrest gradually morphed into local and at times unique forms of class warfare. Such struggles in Boston, including those between radical socialists (both homegrown and immigrant) and government officials propelled the city to the apex of industrial conflict in the early twentieth century.³⁸⁸ This notion was perpetuated and consistently exacerbated by the press – the *Boston Daily Globe* being a particular case-in-point - who consistently pushed an anti-union agenda that held Bolshevism in direct opposition to traditional notions of American law and order.

The 1919 strike wave that engulfed America showed that workers were deliberating their futures in terms that went far beyond the bounds of contracts over wages, hours, and working conditions.³⁸⁹ World War I had developed a desire in the American citizen that was driven by a ‘fusion of immediate demands with grandiose social and political goals’ as well as desires to engage in the new forms of consumerism.³⁹⁰ While the war had fostered a sense of national cohesion, in part manufactured by President Woodrow Wilson, that saw race, class, gender, and region set aside in the quest to defeat a common enemy, this was lost in the immediate aftermath of the war. What emerged in its place was a violently nationalist populace, aided by industry leaders, journalists, and the US Government, who sought to defend their country against a perceived ‘new enemy’, which was defined as the enemy within: the disgruntled, leftist (and often non-native), working classes.³⁹¹

The international success of communism, particularly the Russian Revolution of 1917, coupled with the growing influence of socialists such as American Union leader, Eugene V. Debs, nurtured a sense of fear at home amongst many government and corporate leaders.³⁹²

³⁸⁷ David Montgomery in Barbara Foley, *Spectres of 1919: Class and Nation in the Making of the New Negro* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 9.

³⁸⁸ Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (California: AK Press, 2005) 144-147.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ David Montgomery in Barbara Foley, *Spectres of 1919: Class and Nation in the Making of the New Negro* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 9-10.

³⁹¹ Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 36.

³⁹² Anti-war socialists had been brought up in the European tradition of the class struggle, and they viewed the war as the ultimate capitalist deception; Debs denounced the war as such in a speech at Canton, Ohio, in June of 1918.

For example, during 1919 many governmental figures (including President Theodore Roosevelt and Samuel Gompers) feared that growing worker unrest and the potential adoption of the communist ideology by the American left would unite disparate factions (socialists, who had opposed the war, and progressives, who had largely supported it) and embolden them into some form of revolutionary action.³⁹³ While there was a socialist presence in America, its aims were for the most part different from those of workers affected by a strained labour market. Nonetheless, over time the American government, the media, and many of its citizens came to associate standard forms of labour unrest (such as worker strikes over low pay) with radicalism and the purported ongoing socialist plot to overthrow the U.S. government.³⁹⁴

In Boston, the revolutionary spirit of Bolshevism was being cultivated and disseminated principally by a relatively small group of Italians. Known as Galleanists, this group were supporters of Luigi Galleani, an insurrectionary anarchist active in the United States from 1901 to 1919.³⁹⁵ As the editor of *La Questione Sociale*,³⁹⁶ the leading Italian anarchist periodical in the United States of the time, Galleani opposed militarism and the War, but advocated the use of violence at home under the banner of ‘propaganda by the deed’; i.e., ‘acts of terrorism’, particularly ‘bombings and assassinations’ for the purposes of eliminating ‘tyrants’ and ‘oppressors’.³⁹⁷ In this respect, violence was, as some Americans feared, to be used as a catalyst for the overthrow of existing government institutions perceived by prospective attackers to be ‘tyrants’ and ‘oppressors’. In short, Galleani regarded the capitalist

³⁹³ Charles H. McCormick, *Hopeless Cases: The Hunt for the Red Scare Terrorist Bombers* (Maryland: University Press of America, 2005), 36.

³⁹⁴ Rosalind Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 16.

³⁹⁵ Luigi Galleani, *The End of Anarchism?* (London: BCM Refract, 1982).

³⁹⁶ Harvard University Library. Microforms (Lamont). Latin American anarchist and labour periodicals, 1880-1940 ; reel 41. Call # anno 1:n.8-10. La questione sociale órgano comunista- anarchico, *Questione sociale*. Published 1880-1940.

³⁹⁷ John F. Neville, *Twentieth-century Cause Célèbre: Sacco, Vanzetti, and the Press, 1920-1927* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 3.

system as the enemy of the worker, arguing against the exploitation and oppression of the man by the man.³⁹⁸

The foundations for this supposed revolutionary spirit, while conceived in Bolshevik Russia, had been laid much closer to home. During the year 1912, in the drab polyglot company town of Lawrence, Massachusetts (some thirty-seven miles north of Boston) the textile industry ground to a halt as twenty-thousand mill workers went on strike over unfair wage cuts and oppressive conditions.³⁹⁹ The strike was led by an international, racial labour union founded in 1905, known as the Industrial Workers of the World (also known as, Wobblies).⁴⁰⁰ Organised by the Wobblies' one-eyed giant, William 'Big Bill' Hayward, the strike brought together Italian anarchists, including orator and labour organiser, Carlo Tresca, poet, Arturo Giovannitti, and workers from fifty-one different nationalities: including Irish, Germans, Syrians, Poles, Lithuanians and more speaking forty-five languages.⁴⁰¹

Of the twenty-two thousand workers, fifty percent are believed to have been women and children.⁴⁰² Common amongst all was malnutrition and disease (principally, Rickets), with premature death being commonplace.⁴⁰³ In total, the strike lasted ten weeks and received nationwide publicity. In the end, management capitulated to the demands of the workers and a new set of laws governing working conditions was accepted following a congressional investigation.⁴⁰⁴ Far more significant, however, was the way men, women, and children from vastly different backgrounds, hampered by many obstacles (including language barriers), were able to overcome insurmountable opposition and a minimum of resources to accomplish their

³⁹⁸ Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 36.

³⁹⁹ Harvard University Library. Microforms (Lamont). Call # Film W. 17403. United States Congress, *United States. Congress. House. Committee on Rules., The strike at Lawrence, Mass. : hearings before the Committee on Rules of the House of Representatives on House resolutions 409 and 433, March 2-7, 1912.* (Washington: G.P.O., 1912).

⁴⁰⁰ Patrick Renshaw, *The Wobblies: the story of the IWW and syndicalism in the United States* (Chicago : Ivan R. Dee, 1999).

⁴⁰¹ Elizabeth Boosahda, *Arab-American Faces and Voices: The Origins of an Immigrant Community* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2010), 77.

⁴⁰² Joyce L. Kornbluh ed., *Rebel Voices* (New York: PM Press, 2011), 169.

⁴⁰³ Justus Ebert, 'The Industrial Democracy Arrives' in Joyce L. Kornbluh, ed., *Rebel Voices* (New York: PM Press, 2011), 169.

⁴⁰⁴ Joyce L. Kornbluh, *Rebel Voices* (New York: PM Press, 2011), 169-70.

goals.⁴⁰⁵ The Lawrence strike not only showed the importance of ethnic organisation in Massachusetts, it also served to inspire a national generation of the working class into action,⁴⁰⁶ transforming interracial labour solidarity into an essential characteristic of disputes.

This notion is further embellished by a second strike at the Lawrence Mill in 1919. On this occasion, all 32,000 workers at the mill (consisting of Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Russian Jews, Syrians, Turks, Greeks and others) chose to strike, invoking the spirit of Hayward, Tresca, Giovanti and followers before them.⁴⁰⁷ In their quest to reduce their six-day nine-hour week to one of eight hours at the same rate of pay, the 1919 strikers showed that the methods developed in 1912 had not been forgotten.⁴⁰⁸ Spurred on by those with shared experiences of the 1912 strike, such as radical figures, Joseph Salemo,⁴⁰⁹ Annie Trina, Carl Vogt, and Ime Kaplan,⁴¹⁰ a registered alien of some fifteen years and a member of the Mule Spinners' Union, strike leaders sent out an appeal in twenty languages, calling all textile workers to cease work.⁴¹¹ Unlike Hayward, Tresca, and Giovanti et al in 1912, however, Kaplan and company were this time not so much concerned with working conditions,⁴¹² but rather saw the whole strike effort as 'part of a larger pattern of capitalist disintegration preliminary to the seizure of power by the proletariat'.⁴¹³

Central to this quest for power was also an opposition to and outright dismissal of the American constitution, which was considered, amongst many things, to be prejudicial towards

⁴⁰⁵ Joyce L. Kornbluh, *Rebel Voices* (New York: PM Press, 2011), 169-70.

⁴⁰⁶ Elizabeth Boosahda, *Arab-American Faces and Voices: The Origins of an Immigrant Community* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2010), 76-77.

⁴⁰⁷ Dexter Philip Arnold, *"A Row of Bricks": Worker Activism in the Merrimack Valley Textile Industry, 1912-1922, Volume 3* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press - Madison, 1985), 589-560.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Along with Salemo and company, -syndicalist labour organizer, Antonino Carpraro and local strike leader, Nathan Kleinman assisted in the strikes. On April 6, masked men, believed to be police, dragged both from their beds in the early hours of the morning and drove them out of town. Kleinman was later found alive, with a rope around his neck, while Carpraro was beaten half to death.

⁴¹⁰ David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 389.

⁴¹¹ Harvard University Library. Widener. Call # CP 23.3.5 v 66 (2011). Catholic Theological Society of America, 'The 1919 Lawrence Strike', Proceedings of the Annual Convention, Volume 2. Page. 209.

⁴¹² Faced with growing resistance and failing businesses, after 104 days, mill owners bowed to the strikers' demands and offered a 15% percent pay increase.⁴¹² This victory marked one of the few that the labour movement experienced in 1919.

⁴¹³ Francis Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), 18.

immigrants and racial minorities. Nevertheless, this was nothing new. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, leading black figures such as Du Bois, Trotter, and Washington expressed opposition to the same constitution, arguing that it constrained blacks. The constitution, in addition to denying immigrants and blacks many simple liberties, such as the right to vote,⁴¹⁴ also promoted an unfair legal system. In this respect, for example, an alien in an immigration hearing was not entitled to standardised constitutional protections, such as formal indictment, and more importantly the right to counsel.⁴¹⁵ Such restrictions were only amplified further when in 1917 as immigrants, blacks, and members of the left had sought to improve the lot of the working American congress passed a series of laws against actions that they deemed to be against ‘the moral good’. Amongst them was the outlawing of ‘espionage and sedition’, and the imposition of ‘stringent penalties for speaking, printing, or otherwise expressing contempt for the government or the constitution or the flag or the uniform of the army of navy’.⁴¹⁶

As Francis Russell asserts, it was under this draconian legislation—unparalleled since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798⁴¹⁷— that Eugene V. Debs and ninety-nine other leftists, including William ‘Big Bill’ Haywood,⁴¹⁸ were sentenced to prison terms ranging from ten days to ten years and were given fines in excess of \$2 million.⁴¹⁹ The American public viewed these men in simple terms as slackers while the press largely portrayed them as traitorous spies and

⁴¹⁴ David F. Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 189.

⁴¹⁵ Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (Princeton University Press, 1996), 128-130.

⁴¹⁶ Rosalind Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 10.

⁴¹⁷ Harvard University Library. Lamont, Microforms. # Microfiche W 2571 (36583). *United States. Congress (5th, 3rd session : 1798-1799). Reports of committees in Congress : to whom were referred certain memorials and petitions complaining of the acts of Congress, concerning the Alien & Sedition laws. : And on the naval establishment, the augmentation of the Navy, and the adoption of measures for procuring of timber and other supplies. : Also an answer of the Massachusetts legislature to the Virginia resolutions respecting dangerous aliens and seditious citizens* (Richmond: Thomas Nicolson, 1799).

⁴¹⁸ Melvyn Dubofsky, *'Big Bill' Haywood* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

⁴¹⁹ Rosalind Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 10-11.

German agents, deserving of far worse.⁴²⁰ This perception is perhaps best exemplified by comments made at the time by Boston's Archbishop, William Henry O'Connell, who stated:

If only all the parlor philosophers and the parlor sociologists could be ordered to the front and stay there long enough to become genuine and sincere, and lose their halos in the blaze of artillery, the world would be rid, at least for the rest of this generation, of some up-to date fallacies and cure all sociologies.⁴²¹

This notion was reiterated on February 23, 1919, when President Woodrow Wilson addressed a 'middle-class' audience in Boston on the subject of worker dissatisfaction and the threat of strikes. He remarked that such attempts to destabilise the American economy were 'not industrial, economic disputes in their origin but were rather results of a deliberate and organised attempt at a social and political movement to establish Soviet Governments in the United States'.⁴²² World events, such as the Spartacist revolt in Berlin,⁴²³ the rise of leftist socialist, Kurt Eisner in Bavaria,⁴²⁴ the start of Bela Kun's dictatorship in Hungary,⁴²⁵ and the wounding of Premier Clemenceau in France by a Bolshevik agent only exacerbated levels of alarm in the Western world.⁴²⁶ The 1912 strike in Lawrence, the growth of socialism during World War I, and the ongoing labour crisis of 1919 all gave rise to a fear in America that the 'radical' left wing in concert with disgruntled workers were plotting revolutionary mass action.⁴²⁷

In its attempts to entrench itself, unionism in Boston adopted the national approach of attempting to sweep the entire production sector into the labour fold.⁴²⁸ Strikes repeatedly

⁴²⁰ Rosalind Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 10-11.

⁴²¹ Paula M. Kane, *Separatism and Subculture: Boston Catholicism, 1900-1920* (North Carolina: UNC Press Books, 2001), 26.

⁴²² Harvard University Library. Widener. Harvard Depository. Call # US 13320.3. President Woodrow Wilson in George E. Kunhardt, *Lawrence: A Manufacturer's View* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill Press, 1919), 14.

⁴²³ Harvard University Library. Widener. Newspaper Microfilm Reading Room. Call # Film NB 379. No Author Attributed, "'Reds' Start Civil War in Berlin: Machine Guns Rake City's Streets; Informal Peace Parley This Week'. *New York Tribune*. Published: January 8, 1919. Page. 1.

⁴²⁴ Grau Bernhard, *Kurt Eisner, 1867-1919: eine Biographie* (München : C.H. Beck, 2001).

⁴²⁵ Harvard University Library. Widener. Call # Microfilm - Film NC 1. No Author Attributed, 'Bella Kun Falls: Dictatorship in Hungary'. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Published: July 23, 1919. Page, 11.

⁴²⁶ Francis Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 18-19.

⁴²⁷ James Ciment, *Encyclopedia of the Jazz Age: From the End of World War I to the Great Crash, Volumes 1-2* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 145.

⁴²⁸ David Brody in Cliff Brown, *Racial Conflict and Violence in the Labor Market: Roots in the 1919 Steel Strike* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1998), 4.

took on political overtones, with general committees often repudiated by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the Central Labor Union, and the IWW.⁴²⁹ One writer for the *Union Record*, the Utility Workers Union of America newspaper of the time, noted in February 1919: 'We are undertaking the most tremendous move ever made by labor in this country. We are starting on a road that leads—NO ONE KNOWS WHERE!'⁴³⁰ Over the course of the year, that road consistently led to further strikes, which spanned the length and breadth of the country. In total, 90% of all steelworkers walked off the job, including 60,000 in Seattle.⁴³¹ Furthermore, strikes in the coal, meatpacking, and automobile industries further destabilised an already stretched labour market, with workers in Boston adopting and on occasion leading national worker trends, and in doing so influencing behaviours in neighbouring towns and across the state.⁴³²

The year 1919 saw 396 strikes recorded in Massachusetts, the highest figure since the state began keeping records in 1887.⁴³³ On April 15, 1919, the Telephone service in New England went dead when 20,000 operators, headed by the Boston local of the telephone workers' union, pulled the switches and walked off their jobs.⁴³⁴ In July, Boston's elevated train workers (8,000 in total) also staged their own protest, costing the city \$5,934, 255 in lost fares.⁴³⁵ In October 5000 New England anglers, many of whom supplied fish to Boston's

⁴²⁹ David Brody in Cliff Brown, *Racial Conflict and Violence in the Labor Market: Roots in the 1919 Steel Strike* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1998), 18-19.

⁴³⁰ No Author Attributed, 'Strike Called: All Unions Go Out'. *Seattle Union Record*. Published: February 3, 1919. Page 1. Available: http://depts.washington.edu/labhist/laborpress/Union_Record_1900-1928.htm. Accessed: August 30, 2015.

⁴³¹ Harvard University Library. Widener. Harvard Depository - Call # Film NC 735. No Author Attributed, '60,000 Will Walk Out: Preparations Now Complete for General Strike'. *Seattle Union Record*. Published: February 1, 1919. Page 1.

⁴³² Harvard University Library. Widener, Harvard Depository. Call # Film NC 119 [Microfilm positive copy of newspaper published daily in Cleveland, Ohio]. No Author Attributed, '90 Per Cent of Steel Workers on Strike, Union Chiefs Claim', *The Cleveland Press*. Published September 22, 1919. Page 1.

⁴³³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COMPLETE LIST OF KILLED AND INJURED SINCE THE POLICE STRIKE BEGAN IN BOSTON: Police Strike Victims Dead'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: September 12, 1919. Page 7.

⁴³⁴ Harvard University Library. Baker Business. Call # Stacks - Serials 5070250. No Author Attributed, '5000 Fishermen on Strike', *The Labour Gazette*, Volume 34. Page, 1000.

⁴³⁵ Harvard University Library. Baker Business, Harvard Depository. Call # Microfilm Serials: 'Transit Journals'. No Author Attributed, '\$5,934, 255 Loss in Boston'. *Electric Railway Journal*, Volume 55. Page. 216.

markets also went on strike.⁴³⁶ The city's political and business leaders could see the growing influence of national labour unrest and feared that unless this was curbed it would eventually lead to the disabling of their own businesses and communities. As such, naturally, they were alarmed, and they had just cause to be.

What followed was, without question the most significant and arguably the most noteworthy protest of the year: the Boston Police Strike. While striking steel workers and telephone workers abandoning their posts had a detrimental effect on daily life, the decision of eighty-percent of Boston's police force to strike left the city open for anarchy. What ensued were swathes of violence, looting, gambling, and mayhem downtown and throughout South Boston which lasted for several days.⁴³⁷ The local press, once again, rushed to characterise the desire of Boston's police to redress their grievances as part of a broader Bolshevik plot to destabilise governance in the Commonwealth and nationally;⁴³⁸ in conjunction, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge described the strike as 'the first step to Sovietising the country'.⁴³⁹ In an effort to quell the uprising and restore order, Governor Coolidge ordered out the military guard.⁴⁴⁰ The result was five people dead by their hand, and a further three deaths arising from general unrest, including a sailor on Boston Common;⁴⁴¹ in addition, twenty-four people sustained serious injuries.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁶ Harvard University Library. Schlesinger Library. Records, 1891-1955 (inclusive). Consumers' League of Massachusetts. Call # B-24. League for Industrial Rights, *Law and Labor, Volumes 3-4* (Massachusetts: League for Industrial Rights, 1921), 54.

⁴³⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COMPLETE LIST OF KILLED AND INJURED SINCE THE POLICE STRIKE BEGAN IN BOSTON: Police Strike Victims Dead'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: September 12, 1919. Page 7.

⁴³⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'SAYS GOVERNMENT HAS AIDED REDS: Poindexter Chief Republican Speaker at Lowell Senator Declares Coolidge Has Earned Gratitude of Nation'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 1, 1919. Page 7.

⁴³⁹ Boston Public Library. MBLN Central. Microtext. Call #: AN2 .M4B666. No Author Attributed. 'Police Vote to Strike Tonight. Walkout at 5:45 P.M. Rollcall. *The Boston Post*. Published: September 9, 1919. Page 1.

⁴⁴⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'MOBS SMASH WINDOWS. LOOT STORES WILD NIGHT FOLLOWS STRIKE OF POLICE'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: September 10, 1919. Page 1.

⁴⁴¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. Frank P. Sibley, ONE MORE KILLING, BUT RIOTING IS STOPPED GOVERNOR TAKES OVER COMMAND IN BOSTON. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: September 12, 1919. Page 1.

⁴⁴² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Rev Mr Bushnell Talks of Boston Police Strike'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: September 15, 1919. Page 8.

When the Police Union asked that officers be reinstated to restore order, Coolidge refused, remarking that 'there is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime'.⁴⁴³ Instead, Coolidge hired an entirely new force and no striking officer returned to his post.⁴⁴⁴ While many post-war strikes in the United States were unsuccessful and contributed to a decade of declining union membership, the Boston police strike did achieve its objectives, just not for the striking officers: ironically, their replacements were granted higher pay and additional holidays.⁴⁴⁵ Coolidge's actions, coupled with nationwide media interest in the strike, propelled him to a position of prominence that facilitated his rise to the White House - a fact he acknowledged in his autobiography.⁴⁴⁶

In one respect, the collapse of the strike sounded the death knell for the early police labour movement, but it came at a price. It would take a decade for Boston's police force to recover: the hasty recruiting undertaken in its immediate aftermath brought in vast numbers of unsuitable men.⁴⁴⁷ In the year following the strike, 238 patrolmen resigned (many with only a few days experience) and 73 were discharged,⁴⁴⁸ leaving the city vulnerable to criminality such as illicit rum-running, prostitution, and gambling.⁴⁴⁹ In a broader respect, the failure of the Boston police strike impacted the overall aims of the national labour movement. Coolidge's stance sent out a clear message that no longer would America's leaders tolerate the kinds of disorder and chaos that had been endorsed by the left for over a year. In addition, and more significant, the end of the strike marked the culmination of a year in which the wider Boston community had seen firsthand the extent to which social and real property-

⁴⁴³ Cary D. Wintz, *The Politics and Aesthetics of "New Negro" Literature* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 101.

⁴⁴⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COOLIDGE WILL RESIST MOVE TO RESTORE POLICE STRIKERS'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 7, 1919. Page 1.

⁴⁴⁵ Jack R. Greene, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Police Science, Volume 1* (New York: Taylopr & Francis, 2007), 103.

⁴⁴⁶ Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1929).

⁴⁴⁷ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # HV7578. B6. 1971. Boston (Mass.). Police Department. *Annual report. The Boston Police Strike: Two Reports* (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1971), 30.

⁴⁴⁸ Rosalind Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 232-233.

⁴⁴⁹ Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward Society's Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010).

damage costs from disaster (the Molasses Flood) and unrest hampered daily life. As such, large factions of this community, in particular the middle-classes, quickly grew tired of civil disorder. Linked in with this change were the shifting opinions of many working class citizens, who had witnessed the failure of the police strike firsthand and thus realised the extent to which Coolidge and company were willing to go in order to stifle the advancement of the left.⁴⁵⁰

3. The Palmer Raids

During the afternoon of April 30, thirty-six bombs addressed to thirty-six wealthy individuals were discovered in post offices along the East and Pacific Coasts.⁴⁵¹ Amongst the addressees were progressive and conservative republicans and neutral civil servants such as commissioner general of immigration, Anthony Caminetti, as well as multimillionaire businessmen such as John D. Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan.⁴⁵² The papers on the morning of May 1 declared that anarchists were planning 'May Day Murders'.⁴⁵³ *The Boston Evening Transcript* noted 'Red Plans for the Most Gruesome May Day tragedy in history'.⁴⁵⁴ A. Mitchell Palmer, Attorney-General of the United States, and resident of Boston, Massachusetts, charged that the bombs were part of a 'Bolshevik plot' to overthrow the government.⁴⁵⁵ In response to these allegations, *The Liberator*, a left-wing socialist journal alleged that the bombs were 'a frame-up by those who are interested in getting the leaders of radicalism, and feel the need of a stronger public opinion before they can act'.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁰ Jonathan R.White, 'Violence During the 1919 Boston Police Strike: An Analysis of the Crime Control Myth'. *Criminal Justice Review* 13, no. 2. Paper 13. 1988. 61-68. Available: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/hst_articles/13. Accessed: January 14, 2015.

⁴⁵¹No Author Attributed, 'Send Death Bombs to 36 U.S. Leaders', *Chicago Tribune*. Published: May 1, 1919. Page. 1. Available: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-11-28/about/chi-member-center-archives_1_archives-article-notice. Accessed: July 4, 2015.

⁴⁵² Beverley Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 27.

⁴⁵³ Francis Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 20.

⁴⁵⁴ Thomas Simon Marshall, *American Civil Liberties and the "Big Red Scare", 1919-1921* (California: Stanford University, 1950), 17.

⁴⁵⁵ Susan Mondshein Tejada, *In Search of Sacco and Vanzetti: Double Lives, Troubled Times, and the Massachusetts Murder Case that Shook the World* (New England: UPNE, 2012), 116.

⁴⁵⁶ Philip Sheldon Foner, *May Day - Первое мая: краткая история международного праздника рабочих, 1886 - 1986* (New York: International Publishers Company, 1986), 87-89.

With tensions high in Boston on May 1, the police attacked 1500 marchers in a parade sponsored by the Lettish Workmen's Association, Russian-born revolutionaries, many of whom had served with bands of Lettish terrorists in the 1905 Russian insurrection.⁴⁵⁷ The Boston Letts, belonging to the pro-Bolshevik Russian Federation of the Socialist Party, operating out of Roxbury, South Boston, were a tough minded group who provided Soviet Russia with secret couriers, propagandists, and at least two leaders who at various times were in charge of illegal Communist operations in the United States.⁴⁵⁸ In contrast, the police were aided by a mob of civilian bystanders, who had been swept along by media and government hysteria.⁴⁵⁹ The community condoned the actions of the police and thus extra-legal communal social violence for a perceived 'just cause' was in this instance deemed necessary.⁴⁶⁰

This approach to radicalism served only to exacerbate hostilities further and not surprisingly, one police officer was stabbed to death and one civilian was wounded.⁴⁶¹ In a retaliatory act, civilian mobs proceeded to attack and subsequently demolish the Boston Socialist Headquarters. Furthermore, vigilantes went on the rampage across the city, attacking socialists anywhere they could be found.⁴⁶² In total, 16 May Day paraders were arrested, charged with rioting and resisting the police. Fourteen were found guilty by Boston-born judge, A. Hayden of disturbing the peace and were sentenced to jail terms ranging from six to eighteen months. Predictably, not a single member of the police or the associated community mob was arrested.⁴⁶³

After sentencing, Hayden remarked that 'Foreigners who think they can get away with their doctrines in this country . . . if I could have my way, I would send them and their families

⁴⁵⁷ Philip Sheldon Foner, *May Day - Первое мая: краткая история международного праздника рабочих, 1886 - 1986* (New York: International Publishers Company, 1986), 87-89.

⁴⁵⁸ Francis Russell, *A City in Terror: Calvin Coolidge and the 1919 Boston Police Strike* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 11.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁶⁰ Jack Tager, *Boston Riots: Three Centuries of Social Violence* (New England: UPNE, 2001), 151.

⁴⁶¹ Philip Sheldon Foner, *May Day - Первое мая: краткая история международного праздника рабочих, 1886 - 1986* (New York: International Publishers Company, 1986), 87-89.

⁴⁶² Philip Sheldon Foner, *May Day - Первое мая: краткая история международного праздника рабочих, 1886 - 1986* (New York: International Publishers Company, 1986), 87-89.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*

back to the countries from which they came'.⁴⁶⁴ These words were spoken not just in the wake of violence but also in light of conclusions drawn by a Boston-based agent hired by the state to look into the emergence of Bolshevism in the city.⁴⁶⁵ The research of this particular agent concluded that Boston had become a makeshift headquarters for the ideology, with thirty-seven notable radical groups posing an imminent threat.⁴⁶⁶ The research stated that one such group was an influential circle of Jewish communists who met at Shapiro Hall on Leveritt Street.⁴⁶⁷ At different times during the year, this circle is believed to have hosted Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (a faction of the Russian socialist movement), and received considerable finance from overseas backers.⁴⁶⁸ The language used by Hayden was dangerous, not only because it served as provocation for further attacks on socialist factions, but it also created a greater sense of racial division and increased tension in the city, conjuring the notion of us (i.e., Anglo-Americans) and them (anyone not of white skin colour).

The inability of leading figures in government and those responsible for law and order in Boston to grasp the complex makeup of the working classes created a greater sense of tension. This tension, as such, propagated a broader issue of racial discrimination, which had a residual impact on the black community. While men such as Hayden saw the benefits of universally stifling the working classes and the poor,⁴⁶⁹ many Bostonians, including several Brahmin figures who in the past had sought to assist the left, harboured the profound fear that stifling the left so intensely might inspire hordes of them to veer sharply towards an uncompromising support for radicalism.⁴⁷⁰ This fear was never backed up by any significant evidence, but time would prove that the threat of radicalism in Boston was real: for the lengths

⁴⁶⁴ Steve Puelo, *The Boston Italians: A Story of Pride, Perseverance, and Paesani, from the Years of the Great Immigration to the Present Day* (Boston Beacon Press, 2007), Chapter 14.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Kenneth Ackerman, *YOUNG J. EDGAR: Hoover and the Red Scare, 1919-1920* (Virginia: Viral History Press, 2011), 30-36.

⁴⁶⁷ David Kaufman, *Shul with a Pool: The "synagogue-center" in American Jewish History* (New England: UPNE, 1999), 197-8.

⁴⁶⁸ Zosa Szajkowski, *The impact of the 1919-20 Red Scare on American Jewish life* (New Jersey: Ktav, 1974), 322-4.

⁴⁶⁹ Geraks Home, *Black Liberation/Red Scare: Ben Davis and the Communist Party* (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1994), 342.

⁴⁷⁰ Isaac Kramnick, Barry Sheerman, *Harold Laski: a life on the left* (Bristol: Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1993), 131.

to which ardent radicals, principally Italian Galleanists, would stretch to in order to be heard were far-reaching and often beyond the comprehension of even the most ardent anti-leftist supporter.

On June 2, 1919, the danger of Hayden's words was brought to bear. It was on this day that leading figures in Boston, including Hayden himself, were the target of orchestrated terrorist bombings. A little before midnight, the Hayden home of the Roxbury Municipal Court at 11 Wayne Street⁴⁷¹ was almost completely destroyed by a pipe bomb packed with shrapnel and powered by dynamite.⁴⁷² No one was hurt in the explosion, principally because the Haydens, their twenty-year old son, Malcolm Hayden, aside, were away at their summer home at the time. While Malcolm was using the house, he had been out for the evening and was some 100 feet away from the blast upon his return. He is said to have seen a car speeding away from the scene, but did not catch a glimpse of the driver.⁴⁷³

On the same day, two minutes after midnight, the home of Leland W. Powers, a representative in the Massachusetts State Legislature, was targeted.⁴⁷⁴ The bomb used was similar in design to the one that almost destroyed Judge Hayden's home, and on this occasion tore away one side of the targeted house.⁴⁷⁵ Powers, his children, and two house cleaners were home at the time but fortuitously none was seriously injured. In the aftermath of the incident, the Boston police combed the scene around the blast site and made a remarkable discovery:

⁴⁷¹ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # HV7578. B6. No Author Attributed, 'ATTACKS IN 6 OTHER CITIES; House of Boston Justice Who Sentenced Reds Is Shattered. BOMB TO PITTSBURGH JUDGE Cleveland Mayor's House Damaged--Attempt on Philadelphia Church. PATERSON SCENE OF ATTACK House of a Legislator in the Bay State Is Badly Wrecked. LEGISLATOR'S HOME DAMAGED BY BOMB', *The New York Times*. Published: June 3, 1919. Page, 1.

⁴⁷² Harvard University Library. Centre for Research Libs; Interlibrary Microfilm. Call # CRL Request: Paris : Imprimerie des Arts et des Sports, -1923.; No. 1 (July 4, 1917)-no. 2042 (Sat., Feb. 17, 1923). No Author Attributed, 'Bombs in 8 Cities Kill 5: Attorney General Palmer's Home Blown Up'. *The Chicago Tribune*. Published: June 3, 1919. p. 1.

⁴⁷³ Joseph T. McCann, *Terrorism on American Soil: A Concise History of Plots and Perpetrators from the Famous to the Forgotten* (Columbia: Sentient Publications, 2006), 55-6.

⁴⁷⁴ Harvard University Library. Harvard Aleph. HOLLIS Number: 013015307. No Author Attributed, 'Comb City for Alleged Radicals', *The Lowell Sun*. Published: January 3, 1920. 1.

⁴⁷⁵ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # HV7578. B6. No Author Attributed, 'ATTACKS IN 6 OTHER CITIES; House of Boston Justice Who Sentenced Reds Is Shattered. BOMB TO PITTSBURGH JUDGE Cleveland Mayor's House Damaged--Attempt on Philadelphia Church. PATERSON SCENE OF ATTACK House of a Legislator in the Bay State Is Badly Wrecked. LEGISLATOR'S HOME DAMAGED BY BOMB', *The New York Times*. Published: June 3, 1919. Page, 1.

the strewn body parts of the man who had attempted to decimate the Powers' home.⁴⁷⁶ While it has been speculated by Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas,⁴⁷⁷ and Susan Mondschein Tejada⁴⁷⁸ that the attack was a suicide mission that fell short of its aims, conversely the police believed the explosive device used had detonated prematurely, significantly reducing its impact and thus sparing the lives of all inside the house.⁴⁷⁹

Also discovered in close proximity to the strewn body parts of the bomber was an Italian-English dictionary, largely intact. While police never positively identified the dead man, there has been much speculation.⁴⁸⁰ For example, historian Paul Avrich concluded that much of the evidence, including the dictionary, pointed to Carlo Valdinocci, a one-time Italian resident of Somerville (located two miles northwest of Boston), and a dedicated Galleanist.⁴⁸¹ The FBI has supported Avrich's claim.⁴⁸² In a general respect, the presence of Italian paraphernalia at the scene of the crime was in keeping with other attacks carried out across the United States in New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and New Jersey.⁴⁸³ At all of the bombings carried out in these cities, police found leaflets signed by Italian 'anarchist fighters'.⁴⁸⁴ The message of the text was consistently plain enough and sobering:

There will have to be bloodshed: we will not dodge; there will have to be murder; we will kill, because it is necessary; there will have to be destruction; we shall not rest until your downfall is complete and labouring masses have taken possession of what rightfully belongs to them...Long live social revolution! Down with tyranny.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁶ Michael Newton, *The FBI Encyclopedia* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2003), 15-17.

⁴⁷⁷ Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas, Martha Merrill Umphrey, *The Limits of Law* (California: Stanford University Press, 2005), 76.

⁴⁷⁸ Susan Mondschein Tejada, *In Search of Sacco and Vanzetti: Double Lives, Troubled Times, and the Massachusetts Murder Case that Shook the World* (New England: UPNE, 2012), 117.

⁴⁷⁹ No Author Attributed: The Federal Bureau of Investigation, 'Stories: A Byte Out of History The Palmer Raids'. Published: December 28, 2007. Available: https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2007/december/palmer_122807. Accessed: June 30, 2015.

⁴⁸⁰ Ann Hagerdorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 221.

⁴⁸¹ Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005), 172.

⁴⁸² The FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation. Case Files: 'Philadelphia Division: 1919 Bombings'. Available: <https://www.fbi.gov/philadelphia/about-us/history/famous-cases/famous-cases-1919-bombings>. Accessed: June 29, 2015.

⁴⁸³ Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005), 171-173.

⁴⁸⁴ Steve Puelo, *The Boston Italians: A Story of Pride, Perseverance, and Paesani, from the Years of the Great Immigration to the Present Day* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007).

⁴⁸⁵ Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 149.

Five days before the attack on his home, Powers had introduced an anti-sedition bill to the Massachusetts legislature. The bill called for anyone advocating or inciting an assault on public officials, the destruction of property, and the overthrow of government by force to be sentenced to three years in prison.⁴⁸⁶ Needless to say, this legislation was rejected by anarchists in Boston and can be seen to have instigated the violence. In addition to attacks on the Powers and Hayden's homes, more followed including the bombing of Harry Klotz's home in New Jersey.⁴⁸⁷ Klotz was the president of the Suanhna Silk Company, a member of the Paterson Manufacturers' Association's executive board, and an outspoken opponent of striking silk weavers.⁴⁸⁸ Although a number of anarchist terrorist attacks had occurred over the years, June 2, 1919 was noteworthy because it was the first time that targeted bombings, directed at specific government officials and industrialists, were carried out simultaneously over a large area of America. This indicated that anarchism was a national problem, and one that had the potential for great devastation and loss of life.⁴⁸⁹

The response to these attacks came in the form of a large-scale government crackdown on anarchist activities known as the 'Palmer raids', duly named after A. Mitchell Palmer.⁴⁹⁰ These raids, carried out in late 1919 and early 1920, were the high-water mark of the ongoing conflict. In total, the raids were responsible for the arrests and deportations of up to an estimated 10,000 alien anarchists and communists.⁴⁹¹ However, embroiled in the forays and clampdowns of this new legislation were widespread abuses of police power. On a consistent basis, raids swept up large numbers of innocent people, including many factions of the black

⁴⁸⁶ Boston Public Library. MBLN Libraries; Periodicals. Call # PER AP2 .R78 multi. vols. No Author Attributed, 'Anti-Sedition Law Endorsed', *The Rotarian*, Vol XVI, No. 2. Published: February 1920. 86.

⁴⁸⁷ United States Congress, House Committee on Rules, Alexander Mitchell Palmer, *Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer on Charges Made Against Department of Justice by Louis F. Post and Others, Volumes 1-2* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), 35-37.

⁴⁸⁸ Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2015). 152.

⁴⁸⁹ United States. Congress. House. Committee on Rules, Alexander Mitchell Palmer, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer on Charges Made Against Department of Justice by Louis F. Post and Others, *Volumes 1-2* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), 35-37.

⁴⁹⁰ Joseph T. McCann, *Terrorism on American Soil: A Concise History of Plots and Perpetrators from the Famous to the Forgotten* (Colorado: Sentient Publications, 2006), 55-6.

⁴⁹¹ Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 124.

community who were, as previously noted, excluded from constitutional protections and worse, were targeted under the 'espionage and sedition' bill of 1917.⁴⁹² In the wake of such harsh treatment, Roger Crownover notes that 'Americans began to realize that perhaps Palmer and many others had overreacted and that the civil rights of innocent people had been violated'.⁴⁹³

4. The 'Red Summer': class prejudice, strike breaking, and the black struggle

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the Brahmin elite in Boston had sought to diminish the growth of what they perceived to be the Irish-Catholic rank and file in the city. The 1884 election of the city's first Irish-American mayor, Hugh O'Brien had signalled the beginning of the end of Brahmin electoral power,⁴⁹⁴ and by 1914, following the majority success of James Michael Curley (who would subsequently dominate state politics), the Irish were in the political ascendancy.⁴⁹⁵ Rather than utilising their channels of influence in government and the media to propagandise anti-Catholic sentiments and promote 'nativism'⁴⁹⁶ as a means of debasing their Irish counterparts, the Brahmins instead sought to use 'good politics' and 'reforms' as the main rallying cries against what they considered to be corrupt Irish-dominated ward politics.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹² Harvard University Library. Lamont, Microforms. # Microfiche W 2571 (36583). United State. Congress (5th, 3rd session : 1798-1799). *Reports of committees in Congress : to whom were referred certain memorials and petitions complaining of the acts of Congress, concerning the Alien & Sedition laws. : And on the naval establishment, the augmentation of the Navy, and the adoption of measures for procuring of timber and other supplies. : Also an answer of the Massachusetts legislature to the Virginia resolutions respecting dangerous aliens and seditious citizens* (Richmond: Thomas Nicolson, 1799).

⁴⁹³ Roger Crownover, *The United States Intervention in North Russia, 1918, 1919: The Polar Bear Odyssey* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 96.

⁴⁹⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'FOR MAYOR, HUGH O'BRIEN'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 26, 1884. Page 5.

⁴⁹⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'CURLEY WINS BY 5720 MAJORITY'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: January 14, 1914. Page 1.

⁴⁹⁶ (the policy of protecting the interests of native-born or established inhabitants against those of immigrants) Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. Special Dispatch to the Globe, 'AMERICAN JEWRY IS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 26, 1919. Page 5.

⁴⁹⁷ James Edward Smethurst, *The African American Roots of Modernism: From Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance* (California: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 146-147.

While the Irish and the Brahmins rarely agreed on social, economic, and political matters, they shared common ground in their eagerness to prohibit the settling of immigrants⁴⁹⁸ from Eastern Europe and Russia, principally Jews.⁴⁹⁹ This ground can mostly be seen to have manifested itself in the belief that Eastern Europeans, Russians, Poles, and the like were inferior people to western whites.⁵⁰⁰ While this pre-eminence stemmed in part from different standards of social, economic,⁵⁰¹ and religious standing, with American forms of Christianity, capitalism, and general living standards considered superior, there was a broader political issue at play, too. In this respect, the integration of Eastern Europeans, who had arrived from regions of the world that had close ties to forms of socialist activity, whether in the form of prominent radical groups or more alarmingly, government, posed threats to national security, as perceived by the media and government.⁵⁰²

However, the presence of immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia in Boston was not something exclusive to the early twentieth century. In fact, the multicultural, multi-ethnic makeup of the city had been under construction for almost one-hundred years. By 1850, for example, the North End was already a melting pot of immigration.⁵⁰³ In part by design but also as a result of a natural tendency to flock together, this area housed an eclectic array of immigrants, including Eastern Europeans, Italians, Germans, and amongst them some blacks and Irish.⁵⁰⁴ In fact, by this time, the Irish, the largest ethnic group in Boston, made up almost

⁴⁹⁸ The Brahmin notion of nativism can be seen to have extended to the classification of the Boston-Irish as immigrants, they had after all between 1800 and 1850 poured into America by the tens of thousands, the two shared at least some common ground. Harvard University Library. Wiedener Holdings: Vol. I-III (1922-1924) incomplete. Call # HP 670.1 F. No Author Attributed, 'Erin-Go-Bragh'. *The International Interpreter: The International News Weekly*. Published: April 8, 1922. Page, 71.

⁴⁹⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. Uncle Dudley, 'What Can we Do? The Eastern front has reappeared and it is hostile'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: March 25, 1919. Page 10.

⁵⁰⁰ Douglas Hales, *A Southern Family in White and Black: The Cuneys of Texas* (Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 109-110.

⁵⁰¹ The arrival of Eastern Europeans placed a strain on an already exhausted post-war economy.

⁵⁰² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, '1,400,000 TONS FOOD NEEDED, SAYS HOOVER', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: January 8, 1919. Page 3.

⁵⁰³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Library, Microtext. Call # F73.9.A1 U62 v.248 c.1. United States. National Archives And Records Service; United States. Immigration And Naturalization Service, *Boston, 1821-1850 Passenger and Immigration Lists, Passenger lists of vessels arriving at Boston, Massachusetts, 1891-1943* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1980).

⁵⁰⁴ Joseph J. Bonocore, *Raised Italian-American: Stories, Values and Traditions from the Italian Neighborhood* (Indiana: iUniverse, 2005), 19.

fifty-percent of the 20,000 residents in the area, were often subject to nativism and anti-Catholicism. For example, in response to the Civil War Draft on July 14, 1863, which did not favour them, Irish men and boys clashed violently with the police and Union Army troops in the area.⁵⁰⁵

In the wake of mid-nineteenth-century immigration, a group of Harvard graduates of Brahmin stock formed the Immigration Restriction League in 1894, believing that mass immigration throughout Boston was the main contributing factor to social problems – notably urban crowding, poverty, crime, and labour unrest.⁵⁰⁶ To combat these, the Immigration Restriction League advocated a literacy requirement and eugenic testing for immigrant admission to the United States as a way of limiting entry from Eastern Europe.⁵⁰⁷ Having achieved the passage of a Congressional literacy bill with the support of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts in 1896, the bill eventually passed in 1918.⁵⁰⁸ Despite this, however, by 1930 the North End had seen an influx of Italian immigration, with 44,000 packed into an area less than one mile square in size, indicating great levels of internal migration amongst non-natives.⁵⁰⁹

The movements of the city's small black population from the late eighteenth century to the start of the Jazz Age perhaps best exemplify this internal migration. Property records indicate that the earliest notion of a concentrated black community in Boston existed on Beacon Hill's North Slope.⁵¹⁰ An area situated around modern day Joy Street and overlooking

⁵⁰⁵ James Patrick Byrne, Philip Coleman, Jason Francis King, *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History : a Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia, Volume 2* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 552.

⁵⁰⁶ T. Korver., *The Fictitious Commodity: A Study of the U.S. Labor Market, 1880-1940* (New Hampshire: Greenwood Publishing Limited, 1990), 99.

⁵⁰⁷ Leonard C. Schlup, James Gilbert Ryan, *Historical Dictionary of the Gilded Age* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 247.

⁵⁰⁸ The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Immigration Restriction League. Available: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/immigration-and-migration/timeline-terms/immigration-restriction-league>. Accessed: June 1, 2014.

⁵⁰⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # Nonfiction HT123 .G724. Scott A. Gear, Ann Lennarson Greer, *Neighborhood and ghetto: the local area in large-scale society* (Basic Books, 1974), 278-284.

⁵¹⁰ 'One of Boston's oldest communities, Beacon Hill gets its name from a beacon that once stood atop its hill to warn locals about foreign invasion.'

the nation's first public park,⁵¹¹ Beacon Hill housed a mixture of classes, races, and households. Around the mid-eighteenth century, this area was home to an estimated one-thousand blacks.⁵¹² By the time the first national census of 1790 was conducted, 18,000 blacks were believed to be living in the city, including a small collective of 791 free blacks in the North End.⁵¹³ At this time, Boston was the only city that listed no slaves, with approximately 27,000 free blacks living in the North and 32,000 in the South.⁵¹⁴ However, freedom did little to assist them in the struggle of finding decent housing, establishing independent supportive institutions, and educating their children.⁵¹⁵

Most accounts of the time describe the black community of Beacon Hill as living in relative squalor, amidst a cornucopia of unlicensed taverns and houses of prostitution.⁵¹⁶ Indeed it was viewed by old line Brahmins and Puritans for much of the nineteenth century to have been rife with excess and sin,⁵¹⁷ with one city missionary, capturing its Bacchanalian character,⁵¹⁸ calling it a 'sink of iniquity':

Five and twenty or thirty shops are open on Lord's Day from morning to evening, and ardent spirits are retailed without restraint, while hundreds are intoxicated, and spend the holy Sabbath in frolicking and gambling, in fighting and blaspheming; and many in scenes of iniquity and debauchery too dreadful to be named.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹¹ Boston African American National Historical Site: *Draft General Management Plan & Environmental Assessment. Contributors: United States. National Park Service. North Atlantic Regional Office* (North Atlantic Region, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1984), 3.

⁵¹² The Americana: a universal reference library, comprising the arts and sciences, literature, history, biography, geography, commerce, etc., of the world, Volume 3., edited by Frederick Converse Beach, George Edwin Rines (Scientific American Compiling Department, 1912).

⁵¹³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # HA201.1790.A302. United States. Census office. 1st census, 1790, First census of the United States, 1790 [microform], (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1960).

⁵¹⁴ Shirley Wilson Logan, *We are Coming: The Persuasive Discourse of Nineteenth-century Black Women* (Illinois: SIU Press, 1999), 2-3.

⁵¹⁵ Garth M. Rosell, *Boston's Historic Park Street Church: The Story of an Evangelical Landmark* (Kregel Publications, 2010), 31.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., 43-44.

⁵¹⁷ Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, Cynthia Falk, ed., 'Civic Order on Beacon Hill'. *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, Volume 15. 2008. Page, 43. Available: <http://www.vernaculararchitectureforum.org/buildingsandlandscapes>. Accessed: June 12, 2015.

⁵¹⁸ Characterised by or given to drunken revelry.

⁵¹⁹ Harvard University Library. Houghton, Harvard Depository. Call # *96-198 (In case, 27 cm). Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes, *A brief account of the origin and progress of the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes: With extracts from the reports of the Society, in May, 1817 and 1818, and extracts from the reports of their missionaries, Rev. James Davis, and Rev. Dudley D. Rosseter.* (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1818). 8-9.

Barbara Meil Hobson notes in her work *Uneasy Virtue* that based on contemporary descriptions, the area resembled 'Hogarth's eighteenth century working class London, with its rowdy street life, nightly brawls, drunks reeling in the streets, and prostitutes calling to passersby'.⁵²⁰



Right: Figure 3.3: Map showing the North End and Beacon Hill areas of Boston. Left: Figure 3.4: Aerial view of the West End and Beacon Hill neighbourhoods.

Between 1800 and the start of the Civil War, the main black community on Beacon Hill had consisted of a white-serving labour force, made up of stevedores, waiters, cleaners, and significantly, sailors.⁵²³ As leading Brahmin merchants, such as the Lead King of Boston, Joseph Houghton Chadwick⁵²⁴ built their fortunes in the carrying trade and migrated to the area, they employed working-class blacks as house servants to conduct daily chores and maintain the household.⁵²⁵ While some of these blacks lived in-house in separate servant quarters, the bulk of this force resided in separate accommodation along the northern slope of the Hill.⁵²⁶ Alongside them, emerged a robust black intellectual and political community,

⁵²⁰ Barbara Meil Hobson, *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 13-14.

⁵²¹ AccessMaps.com, Central Boston, Beacon Hill, North End Road Map of Boston, Massachusetts. Published: 2007. Available: http://www.aaccessmaps.com/show/map/us/ma/boston_ctr_zoom. Accessed: June 12, 2015.

⁵²² Boston. Beacon Hill and West End by Boston Public Library. Available: farm6.staticflickr.com/5287/5334161982_37f923d3cc_o.jpg. Accessed: June 12, 2015.

⁵²³ Chaim M. Rosenberg, *The Great Workshop: Boston's Victorian Age* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 152.

⁵²⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, BUILDING EXCLUSIVELY FOR ITS BUSINESS, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: April 25, 1905. Page, 4.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁵²⁶ Mara Vorhees, *Boston. Con Pianta. Ediz. Inglese* (Boston: Lonely Planet, 2009), 33.

which included many of the black leaders of the northern abolitionist campaign, including political writer, David Walker.⁵²⁷

In conjunction, barbershops owned by black residents, Peter Howard and John J. Smith, located at the foot of Beacon Hill were important meeting places for anti-slavery forces, comprising of leading blacks and white Brahmin figures, including Charles Sumner, and served as stations of the underground railway.⁵²⁸ The willingness of some whites on the Hill to work in interracial alliance with blacks, also offered a small platform upon which the faint murmurings of a black political voice could be heard.⁵²⁹ In fact, Beacon Hill was one of the few places in America during the late nineteenth century where blacks were afforded the right to speak in a political context. As Mark R. Schneider asserts, from 1876 to 1892 at least one black resident from the Beacon Hill area sat on Boston's community council every year,⁵³⁰ and two between 1893 and 1895.⁵³¹

However, since the mid-nineteenth century, the area had been undergoing an economic and architectural reconstruction. While Beacon Hill had housed a portion of the city's upper-crust for over a century, they were now being joined by businessmen and professionals (the Protestant gentry).⁵³² To house these individuals, elegant mansions were being built on the east side of the Hill.⁵³³ With this influx of wealth and the growing fashionability of Beacon Hill as a place of aspirational affluence and prestige, developers and investors committed to the financial growth of the area feared that disorderly houses (occupied by immigrants and blacks) and criminality were a threat to property prices.⁵³⁴ In an effort to

⁵²⁷ William E. Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics: Dilemmas of Political Empowerment in Boston and Liverpool* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000), 39.

⁵²⁸ William E. Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics: Dilemmas of Political Empowerment in Boston and Liverpool* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000), 39-40.

⁵²⁹ Henry Louis Gates, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *African American Lives* (New York: Oxford University, 2004), 842.

⁵³⁰ M. R. Schneider., *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 8.

⁵³¹ Steven J. L Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo: The Influence of Local Leaders* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998), 24.

⁵³² Howard Bryant, *Shut Out: A Story of Race and Baseball in Boston* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 56.

⁵³³ Barbara Meil Hobson, *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 13-14.

⁵³⁴ Barbara Meil Hobson, *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 13-14.

assist in civilising the area, a group of Boston reformers supported by then Mayor Quincy came together in unified objection to the state of living on the Hill.

While some historians, such as Norbert Macdonald,⁵³⁵ have suggested that the area at the time was a racially integrated community underpinned by white affluence, education, and strong abolitionist principles,⁵³⁶ the popular and accepted names for this locality, used by some white residents and many of those looking in, were 'New Guinea' and 'Nigger Hill'.⁵³⁷ This of course implies an undercurrent of outward racism and discrimination.⁵³⁸ Thus, it is no surprise, through puritan-style moral coding, policing, and petitions, that white reformers instigated a steady migration of blacks towards the South End of the city, who without legal and congressional defences were seldom able to defend themselves.⁵³⁹

In 1895, legislative redistricting in the form of a preamble to later and much more aggressive urban renewal was undertaken.⁵⁴⁰ Under this legislation, a renovation policy to replace wooden dwellings with brick housing was enacted. This had the effect of pricing blacks out of the market, which pushed them further into the more affordable South End.⁵⁴¹ In doing so, this migration ended black representation in the area, which culminated with William L. Reed's race to be elected to the General Court in 1896.⁵⁴² By the first decade of the twentieth century, the population of the older neighbourhood in the North End decreased by fifty percent.⁵⁴³ And by 1919, the south end of the city had come to form a cultural melting pot of

⁵³⁵ Norbert MacDonald, *Distant Neighbors: A Comparative History of Seattle & Vancouver* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 148.

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ This area principally comprised the West End on the other side of Beacon Hill. Dorothee Wagner von Hoff, *Ornamenting the 'Cold Roast': The Domestic Architecture and Interior Design of Upper-Class Boston Homes, 1760-1880* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2014), 101.

⁵³⁸ Jeffery Klee, 'Civic Order on Beacon Hill', *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*. Volume 15, Fall 2008. pp. 43-57

⁵³⁹ Walter Muir Whitehill, Lawrence W. Kennedy, *Boston: a topographical history* (Boston: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2000), 60-65.

⁵⁴⁰ Steven J. L Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo: The Influence of Local Leaders* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998), 24-25.

⁵⁴¹ Lawrence W. Kennedy, 'Young Patrick A. Collins and Boston politics after the Civil War', *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Spring, 2010, Vol.38 (1), p.38. Available: <http://www.wsc.mass.edu/mhj>. Accessed: July 1, 2015.

⁵⁴² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed. 'Tributes of Colored Men'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 17, 1896. Page, 4.

⁵⁴³ M. R. Schneider., *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 5.

Armenians, Greeks, Italians, Irish, Lebanese, Jewish, Lithuanians, Russians, Ukrainians, Syrians and many more Eastern and Southern Europeans.⁵⁴⁴ Amongst this collective was a thriving metropolitan community of blacks, with nearby Cambridgeport developing as a centre of colour.⁵⁴⁵

Along the dividing line of Roxbury and the South End, black Boston (by this time a community of 11,500)⁵⁴⁶ boasted fourteen black churches.⁵⁴⁷ In addition, there were two black newspapers (The *Guardian* and the *Chronicle*), two weekly fora, the Women's Service Club of Boston at 464 Massachusetts Avenue, and the Boston Literary (and the League of Women for Community Service) at 558 Massachusetts, as well as a primitive African Art Centre on Harwich Street.⁵⁴⁸ While this community lacked legitimacy amongst the white population of Boston - Christine Bold notes, 'none of these items of Black Cultural life in Boston appeared in the Massachusetts Guide' – they did provide a sense of community structure amongst blacks.⁵⁴⁹ More importantly, this community as Mark R. Schneider asserts was not a ghetto.⁵⁵⁰ Nonetheless, this did not prevent factions of Boston's white population, in particular those in the higher echelons of the city's political class and government positions, viewing the area as a 'stubbornly' and 'squalid' confine.⁵⁵¹

A by-product of this view was that despite its multi-national and multi-ethnic makeup, the South End population was perceived as a cohesive immigrant class—one entity. More to

⁵⁴⁴ John Murrin, Pekka Hämäläinen, Paul Johnson, Denver Brunsman, James McPherson, *Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015), 543.

⁵⁴⁵ M. R. Schneider., *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 5.

⁵⁴⁶ Boston public library. BPL - Social Sciences. Nonfiction. Call # GOV DOCS HA201 1920 .A15 2000x. United States, *Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920* (New York, N.Y. : Norman Ross Pub., 2000), v. 3. Population. Composition and characteristics of the population by states

⁵⁴⁷ Four Baptist, three Methodist, two African Methodist, two Episcopal and one each of the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations, as well as many 'stone-front' churches of the 'Holy Rollers, Spiritualists, 'Wash-foot Baptist', and the followers of Father Divine.

⁵⁴⁸ Christine Bold, *Writers, Plumbers, and Anarchists: The WPA Writers' Project in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts, 2006), 226.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰ The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Immigration Restriction League. Available: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/immigration-and-migration/timeline-terms/immigration-restriction-league>. Accessed: June 1, 2014.

⁵⁵¹ Kristofer Allfeldt, *Jeremy Black, Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 13-14.

the point, the area that they inhabited was viewed, much like the Beacon Hill of old, as an incubator of, amongst many things, paucity, freeloading, lawlessness, but also socialist-inspired radicalism.⁵⁵² While blacks across America, including Boston Garveyites,⁵⁵³ shared some similarities with the aforementioned, few were actors in the 'Red Scare'.⁵⁵⁴ Rather, while Garvey celebrated the Russian Revolution, he was 'not very much concerned' with taking part in such revolutions.⁵⁵⁵ Blacks largely sought to challenge and change the status quo by exploiting economic opportunities offered by northern cities in postwar need, and thereafter bringing about fairer working conditions and wages. There was little evidence that blacks were active in acts of terrorism and violence that had become the calling card of radical socialism.

The problem in Boston, however, was that the simple approach of blacks to social uplift, that of seeking better wages and standards of living, were now perceived as vaguely coterminous with the overall aims of more fiercely determined factions, such as the Galleanists in the North End. In reality, leading blacks, such as W.E.B Du Bois, were unconvinced by radical unionism.⁵⁵⁶ In his autobiography, Du Bois remarked that the terrible Lawrence strike of 1912 had no impact on him as a black man.⁵⁵⁷ In this respect he focused on the ways in which black workers were thwarted in their aspirations every step up the ladder of social mobility.⁵⁵⁸ In particular, he referred to the fact that factory workers in the Great Lawrence strike of 1912 would not let a Negro work beside them, nor live in the same town, and thus blacks were neither part of the community nor a part of any purported union.⁵⁵⁹ As such, they simply lacked the necessary connections to benefit from an association with socialist ideology and practices.

⁵⁵² Kristofer Allfeldt, *Jeremy Black, Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 13.

⁵⁵³ Garveyism: a 20th century racial and political doctrine advocating black self-governance.

⁵⁵⁴ Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Louisiana: LSU Press, 1991), 61.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Gary D. Wintz, *The Politics and Aesthetics of "New Negro" Literature* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 15-16.

⁵⁵⁷ William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, Meyer Weinberg, *The World of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Quotation Sourcebook* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992), 30.

⁵⁵⁸ Michael B. Katz, Thomas J. Sugrue, *W. E. B. Du Bois, Race, and the City: "The Philadelphia Negro" and Its Legacy* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 110.

⁵⁵⁹ David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1868-1919: Biography of a Race* (Macmillan, 1994), 420-421.

Despite this, drawing on the cascade of post-war racial violence, national security officials, such as those in the Federal Bureau of Investigation, were adamant that advocates of racial equality, including the Garveyites, had formed links with communists and socialists.⁵⁶⁰ This naturally gave rise to fears that a national uprising of blacks, inspired and led by socialists and communists was well and truly underway.⁵⁶¹ While there was little in terms of evidence to support this notion, such absence only convinced officials, notably the young J. Edgar Hoover – who, on August 1, 1919, was named head of the Department of Justice’s Radical Division – that they were not looking hard enough.⁵⁶² Driven by Hoover, agents redoubled their efforts to uncover red roots for what they dubbed ‘radical Activities’, and a sustained drive was undertaken by the American security service to disarm blacks because of fears that they were plotting violent uprisings.⁵⁶³

There were incidents, however, that gave some credence to the developing fears of the Department of Justice’s Radical Division. During July 1919, the Reverend M. A. N. Shaw of Boston delivered a speech exhorting black men to stand and fight for their rights, sacrificing their lives if necessary.⁵⁶⁴ He added that ten thousand black men should die killing the same number of white men before a racist mob lynched another innocent victim.⁵⁶⁵ Shaw reiterated this sentiment in an address to the annual convention of William Monroe Trotter’s organisation, the National Equal Rights League in October.⁵⁶⁶ In a defiant speech, Shaw predicted that race riots would cease, as blacks educated – and armed – themselves to act in

⁵⁶⁰ Harvard University Library. Widener. Call # US 10700.27. Harold Cruse, 'A Sense of Continuity: on Explaining 20th Century History', *Negro Digest*. Vol. XVI, No. 9. Published: July 1967. Page, 22-27.

⁵⁶¹ Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Louisiana: LSU Press, 1991), 61.

⁵⁶² David F. Kugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 197.

⁵⁶³ With the cooperation of state and local officials as well as white gun dealers, federal and military officials seized weapons from individual black gun owners, monitored weapons sales to blacks, and asked gun dealers not to sell weapons and ammunition to African Americans. Ibid., 197-198.

⁵⁶⁴ David F. Krugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 201), 33.

⁵⁶⁵ David F. Krugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 201), 33.

⁵⁶⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COOLIDGE ATTACKED AT NEGRO MEETING', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: April 12, 1920. Page, 14.

their own defence. Shaw was careful to advise that blacks should never be the aggressors, but nor should they back down.⁵⁶⁷

This sentiment was echoed by Matt Lewis, the black editor of the *Newport News Star*, who stated, ‘we coloured people must hang together to protect ourselves against the whites. If a white man abuses you, knock him down’.⁵⁶⁸ While black uprisings in Jacksonville, Chicago, and Philadelphia and elsewhere made for compelling national headlines, there was little in the way of actual black unrest in Boston. This, however, did not stop many of the city’s white citizens and government officials from feeding national paranoia that black revolts, as part of the wider issue of worker unrest, were authentic and impending. The utmost fear was focused on the idea that should blacks, in their quest for social equality become fairly well organised, this would pose a serious threat to national security.⁵⁶⁹ In fact, not since Nat Turner’s revolt in 1831 and John Brown’s raid on the Harper’s Ferry arsenal in 1859 had fears of black uprisings so transfixed and troubled white Americans.⁵⁷⁰

When unions and working organisations called for strike actions, blacks were often torn between the quest for better pay and working hours and the need to earn. Black workers were, without question, faced with the least appealing and lowest-paying work, and thus stood to gain the most from the potential of a successful outcome from striking. Ultimately, however the need to support their families far outweighed their principled stance against ongoing oppression in the labour market and some blacks simply maintained their posts while other blacks pursued betterment along with whites but broke strikes regularly.⁵⁷¹ This naturally added further strain to the climate of race relations across America. In fact, unions used the

⁵⁶⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Call on Negroes to Kill Lynchers by Wholesale’. *Boston Herald*. Published: July 14, 1919. p. 2.

⁵⁶⁸ Matt Lewis in David F. Kugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 200.

⁵⁶⁹ Ann Hagedorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 347.

⁵⁷⁰ David F. Kugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 200-201.

⁵⁷¹ Bruce Nelson, *Divided We Stand: American Workers and the Struggle for Black Equality* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 90.

desperateness of blacks as a tool for nurturing in-fighting. In cities such as Boston,⁵⁷² New York,⁵⁷³ and San Francisco, for example, employers actively recruited blacks and black strikebreakers to fulfil the job roles vacated by whites, which only contributed to hostilities, and instigated violence.⁵⁷⁴

Strikebreaking was, for the most part, encouraged by leading black figures, principally W.E.B. Du Bois, who remarked in 1912 that the strategy of white labour was to 'beat or starve the Negro out of his job if you can by keeping him out of the union; or if you must admit him, do the same thing inside the union lines'.⁵⁷⁵ In 1919, as Mary Beth Norton states, union organisers took no interest in, what they perceived to be unskilled labourers, and intentionally excluded women, blacks, and immigrants.⁵⁷⁶ Thus, as Du Bois notes, the idea of 'interracial solidarity' along the lines of the labour bar was a dangerous illusion in the face of monopolising white labour.⁵⁷⁷ In this respect, therefore, the union white man, who was American, German, Irish and above all else, monopolist, was without question to be viewed as an enemy by blacks.⁵⁷⁸ For Du Bois, the imperatives of race far outweighed those of economics and class,⁵⁷⁹ and he charged that 'If white workers went on strike, then black workers should cross the picket lines to claim their jobs, for the white workers deserved themselves the starvation which they plan for their darker and poorer fellows'.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷² Philip Sheldon Foner, Ronald L. Lewis, 'The Black Worker from 1900 to 1919'. *The Black Worker*, Volume V. Published, 1984. Page 28.

⁵⁷³ Harvard University Library. Widener. Call # US 15207.20.8. No Author Attributed, 'The Boston Police Strike, 1919', *New York History: Quarterly Journal of the New York State Historical Association*, Volume 84. 1919. Page, 214-216.

⁵⁷⁴ Bruce Nelson, *Divided We Stand: American Workers and the Struggle for Black Equality* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 90.

⁵⁷⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Library Microtext. Call # E185.5.C92. W.E.B. Du Bois, 'Organized Labor', *The Crisis*, Volume 1. July 1912. Page, 131.

⁵⁷⁶ Mary Beth Norton, Jane Kamensky, Carol Sheriff, David W. Blight, Howard Chudacoff, *A People and a Nation, Volume II: Since 1865* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2014), 489.

⁵⁷⁷ David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1868-1919: Biography of a Race* (Macmillan, 1994), 420-422.

⁵⁷⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Library Microtext. Call # E185.5.C92. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, Meyer Weinberg, *The World of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Quotation Sourcebook* (London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992), 94-5.

⁵⁷⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Library Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. INDIANA HARBOUR: on October 3, 1919: Rioting broke out at the Universal Portland Cement plant and a union picket was shot by one of two armed Negroes who, with nearly 25 other Negroes, attempted to return to work. No Author Attributed, NEGRO SHOOT UNION PECKET, THREE HELD. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 4, 1919. Page 8.

⁵⁸⁰ W.E.B Du Bois, 'Organized Labor', *The Crisis*, Volume 1. . Published: July 1912. Page 38.

At the heart of white paranoia was a false impression of the New Negro movement. In part, unease over the potential of black uprisings in the wake of riots in Washington, Chicago, and elsewhere stemmed from an understanding that these events were not aberrations. However, such acts were rather carried out in the vein of resistance to anti-black collectivism instigated by whites. Thus in a general respect, therefore, whites consistently misinterpreted opposition and retaliatory violence (which had on occasion been condoned by Du Bois, Lewis, and Shaw) as evidence enough that blacks were revolting and plotting a series of attacks on whites as part of a socialist revolution that was being mounted across the United States.⁵⁸¹ Robert Bowen, a postal official, succinctly expressed this viewpoint in an essay entitled 'Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes As Reflected in Their Publications',⁵⁸² distributed less than three weeks before Washington's riot.

Bowen remarked that independent black publications, such as *the New York Age*, *The Crisis*, and *The Messenger*, aroused a perilous brand of class-consciousness among blacks that had as its core aim the desire to establish communist rule in America. On this note, he argued that the black masses were being influenced to assume a very dangerous power through these publications.⁵⁸³ While Bowen acknowledged the significance of black military service during World War I, he disregarded the idea that because they were fit to wear the military uniform of the United States that they were fit for everything else. He embellished this idea by concluding that while blacks had found equal ground alongside whites on the battlefields of World War I, they were not entitled to the same rights as whites on the streets of post-war America—principally because they were neither as educated nor refined as their white counterparts were.⁵⁸⁴

While Bowen at times noted that New Negro authors, such as William M. Tuttle Jr., praised the combative and aggressiveness of militancy in pursuit of democracy, he fixated

⁵⁸¹ W.E.B Du Bois, 'Organized Labor', *The Crisis*, Volume 1. . Published: July 1912. Page 38.

⁵⁸² Robert Bowen, RADICALISM AND SEDITION AMONG THE NEGROES, AS REFLECTED IN THEIR PUBLICATIONS. *The New York Times*. Published: November 23, 1919. Page XX1.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴ Robert Bowen, RADICALISM AND SEDITION AMONG THE NEGROES, AS REFLECTED IN THEIR PUBLICATIONS. *The New York Times*. Published: November 23, 1919. Page XX1.

much of his essay on A. Philip Randolph's and Chandler Owen's (co-founders of *the Messenger*)⁵⁸⁵ support of the radical labor union, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).⁵⁸⁶ In doing so, he argued that because the New Negroes advocated equality and because communists sought classless equality through revolution, all New Negroes were, by default, revolutionary communists.⁵⁸⁷ The New Negroes of Boston, however, were during the year 1919 significantly outnumbered (even within the boundaries of the multi-ethnic South End) and greatly outgunned. In this sense, therefore, it is difficult to suggest that black Boston posed any significant threat. Nonetheless, paradoxically the federal response to the rumours of impending black uprisings across America left them largely misunderstood, maligned, and worse feared.⁵⁸⁸

These rumours had the effect of disseminating the idea that the black populace was largely under the guise of a militant 'New Negro',⁵⁸⁹ that was largely incongruous with conservative elders such as Du Bois. While the prevailing notion amongst whites that blacks were physically and culturally inferior remained in place, fear had somewhat aided the dispelling of the idea that blacks were without much hope of improvement. Rather, whites, including the media, concluded that the ideas of blacks such as Boston's Reverend M. A. N. Shaw, who advocated 'violent challenges to the status quo and the destruction of existing ideologies' that sought to demean and oppress blacks, had given rise to a genuine revolutionary threat.⁵⁹⁰ Thus during a period of widespread paranoia, brought on by radical uprisings, worker strikes, and race riots across America, the perceived black menace (i.e., the

⁵⁸⁵ In 1919, Randolph and Owen were put under surveillance by the FBI, who feared that their publications were beyond doubt exciting the Negro elements America to riot and to commit 'outrages of all sorts'. Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 198.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁷ David F. Krugler, 1919, *The Year of Racial Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 189.

⁵⁸⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # E185.5. A43 multi vols. William N. Jones, 'Day By Day: A Negro Movement Towards Communism', *The Afro American*. Published: August 15, 1925. P. 16.

⁵⁸⁹ Alain Locke, *The New Negro* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1925), xv.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

impending attempt to enact violent and force change in America's social hierarchy) was seen to be no different to the peril posed by radical Italian socialism.⁵⁹¹

In retrospect, the black population of Boston, despite its small size, could boast neither the required stability nor the unity necessary to conduct any form of revolutionary action. In short, it lacked the cohesive and substantial (in terms of numbers) collective spirit needed to bring about positive change. Internal migration (within the city of Boston) and integration (into an immigrant community in the South End) had somewhat served to fracture Boston's black identity, while also wiping out its diminutive but symbolic political representation on Beacon Hill. Moreover, Boston's black population was not collectively organised to counteract physical white oppression, and even less so when faced with more furtive modes of oppression, for instance cultural and social subjugation. Rather, small groups and cooperatives existed within the community that pursued different and in many cases unproductive modes of social uplift.⁵⁹²

For example, by 1919 more wealthy blacks, such as members of the League of Women for Community Service, continued to pursue advancement in interracial alliance with white Brahmins, despite the fact that the latter was no longer able to consolidate its own position of power in the city against an emergent and rapidly dominant Irish population.⁵⁹³ Moreover, while leading black figures such as Monroe Trotter and Booker T. Washington both desired to improve the Negro's lot in American life, they similarly split the black population by employing two very different ideologies. The well-heeled, Harvard-educated Trotter spoke out on principle in favour of higher education and voting rights for blacks and vehemently opposed

⁵⁹¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'CALL TROOPS IN RACE RIOTS; 7 DEAD, 40 HURT'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 29, 1919. Page 1.

⁵⁹² Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crowe, 1890-1920* (New England: UPNE, 1997), 4-10.

⁵⁹³ By 1919 the Boston Brahmins of Beacon Hill and neighbouring areas were surrounded by the increasingly powerful left: Italians in the North End, the emergent Irish in south Boston, and immigrants and blacks in the city's South End. While blacks once saw uplift as viably possible in Boston when sought in interracial alliance with Brahmins, such as William Lloyd Garrison, such optimism was no longer justified. Rather, as Brahmins fought to stabilise their waning power in the face of advancing Irish dominance they were unable to carry the weight of supporting the black struggle and almost entirely abandoned their abolitionist efforts. As such, blacks found themselves increasingly isolated in the south end, with little means of uplift.

segregation.⁵⁹⁴ In contrast, Washington tacitly accepted segregation and promoted self-improvement within such parameters (particularly through basic education, industrial education, and the accumulation of wealth) as the primary means through which blacks could collectively improve their station.⁵⁹⁵

In May of 1919, W.E.B. Du Bois, in a *Crisis* article that responded to the treatment of returning black soldiers, delivered a staunch rallying call to America's blacks. He stated:

We are cowards and jackasses if now that the war is over we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land.⁵⁹⁶

But divided as they were over the solution to the 'Negro Question' and the post-war ideological antagonisms posed by whites, the splintered state of black Boston (when considered in the broader context of racial subjugation that was commonplace during the Red Scare) was not conducive to the fighting of a sterner, longer, and more unbending battle against renewed forms of domination. Instead, splintering simply served to significantly weaken the presence of black Boston and ultimately dilute its voice.

Thus in this respect, the inability of blacks in Boston to be heard in almost every capacity, including the social, political, and labour spheres, cultivated an intense feeling of frustration. By 1920, as blacks in Harlem were beginning to receive national recognition for achievements in the arts and politics, black Bostonians manifested their frustrations in the forms of minor uprisings and sporadic revolts, which were viewed by the Boston media as evidence of their growing radicalism. One such notable occurrence was an attack on Governor Calvin Coolidge at a mass meeting of the National Equal Rights League in Faneuil Hall, on April 20 of that year.⁵⁹⁷ While this attack was billed by the Boston media as an assault carried out by a 'militant' band of 'New Negroes', it was much more than that.

⁵⁹⁴ Stephen R. Fox, *The guardian of Boston: William Monroe Trotter* (Boston: Atheneum, 1970).

⁵⁹⁵ Booker T. Washington, Louis R. Harlan, Raymond W. Smock, *The Booker T. Washington Papers: Cumulative Index* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 27-33.

⁵⁹⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Library Microtext. Call # E185.5.C92. W.E.B. Du Bois, 'Documents of the War', *The Crisis*. May 1919. pp. 13-14.

⁵⁹⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, COOLIDGE ATTACKED AT NEGRO MEETING Stand on Reorganization of National Guard Scored National Equal Rights League Asks Colored Combat Unit, *The Boston Daily Globe*. Published: April 12, 1920. Page 14.

This attack, while carried out by a small group, to a certain extent spoke for the black community of Boston in its entirety. Blacks, unable to make inroads bureaucratically following fifteen months of violated civil rights, physically displayed their anger and disenfranchisement before the highest echelon of power in the city in a symbolic uprising. For while blacks were rarely actors in the Boston Red Scare they had consistently, as a result of its handling by leading figures such as Hayden, Palmer, and on occasion Coolidge (all of whom rarely distinguished between unionism, radicalism, and the left), been caught up in the hysterics and irrationality of heightened yet often undefined post-war racial uncertainty. The impact of this exceeded the dynamics of social Boston and stretched, as will be seen, to the cultural sphere.

Chapter Four: Music in Boston, Massachusetts - from colony to community, the first three centuries

1. Introduction

During the year 1938, Robert Ripley, host of NBC's 'Believe it or Not' radio show, stated that W. C. Handy, a celebrated Mississippi bandleader at the turn of the century, was the originator of jazz.⁵⁹⁸ In riposte, 'hot tune' writer and American virtuoso pianist, Jelly Roll Morton addressed a two page letter in Chicago's music magazine 'DownBeat' to the host that stated, 'It is evidently known, beyond contradiction, that New Orleans is the cradle of jazz, and I, myself, happened to be creator in the year 1902'.⁵⁹⁹ So assured in his claims, Morton signed off the letter, 'Very truly yours, Jelly Roll Morton: Originator of Jazz and Stomps, Victor Artist, World's greatest Hot Tune writer'.⁶⁰⁰ While Morton's letter provides an intricate insight into his personality, it also serves as testimony in the form of dates, places, personnel, and styles of the earliness of developed jazz in America.⁶⁰¹ Furthermore, while Morton's claim is a bold one, the impact of his early compositions and small group orchestrations on 1920's jazz progression at least lends some credence to his claim. As music critic, John Fordham noted, he 'was the first jazz composer of importance'.⁶⁰²

While Morton's claim on jazz has been hotly debated for over half a century, it is widely accepted by many historians, jazz aficionados, and followers of the music that New Orleans was its birthplace.⁶⁰³ During the late nineteenth century, the city became an incubator for the melding of a black Creole subculture with elite European practices.⁶⁰⁴ In brief, many of the

⁵⁹⁸ Jelly Roll Morton in 'I Created Jazz in 1902, Not W.C. Handy', *Down Beat Magazine*. Published: August 1, 1938. Available online: DownBeat Archives –

http://www.downbeat.com/default.asp?sect=stories&subsect=story_detail&sid=987

⁵⁹⁹ Harvard University Library. Lamont Library . Periodicals. George Hoefer, Jr., "'Jelly Roll' Rests His Case'. *DownBeat*. Volume 8. No. 15. August 1, 1941. p. 1

⁶⁰⁰ Harvard University Library. Lamont Library . Periodicals. Jelly Roll Morton in 'I Created Jazz in 1902, Not W.C. Handy', *DownBeat Magazine*. Published: August 1, 1938. Available online: DownBeat Archives - http://www.downbeat.com/default.asp?sect=stories&subsect=story_detail&sid=987

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² John Fordham, '50 great moments in jazz: Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers'. *The Guardian: Jazz Music Blog*. Published: March 9, 2009. p. 1. Available: <http://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2009/mar/09/jelly-roll-morton-red-hot-peppers>: 'Morton had the imagination and vision to glimpse what a completely new music, not yet coalesced from its raw elements, and not yet called jazz, might sound like.'

⁶⁰³ H. Martin, K. Waters., *Jazz: The First 100 Years* (Connecticut: Cengage Learning, 2010). 56

⁶⁰⁴ P. Finkleman., *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). 19.

Creoles – French-and Spanish-speaking blacks who originated from the West Indies – because of their pre-civil war status could afford to educate their children in some of the finest cities in the world.⁶⁰⁵ For example, several Creole musicians, including William Blue, Willie Austin, and P. B. Langford received Conservatory training in Paris before returning to New Orleans and playing at the city’s Opera House.⁶⁰⁶ Musicians such as these prided themselves on their extensive knowledge of European music and their superior musicianship. Furthermore, they exhibited many of the social and cultural values that characterised the upper class.⁶⁰⁷ Randall Sandke remarked that New Orleans’ Creole bands had a near monopoly on society work.⁶⁰⁸ For over fifty years, even throughout peak periods of segregation, Creole bands in the city were hired for the most prestigious and lucrative jobs.⁶⁰⁹

In stark contrast were the inhabitants of the American part of New Orleans, who lived west of Canal Street, the city’s principal boulevard – also known as ‘Broadway of the Crescent City’.⁶¹⁰ Inhabited by church people, gamblers, hustlers, cheap pimps, thieves and prostitutes, these citizens were largely poor, uneducated, and lacking in cultural and economic advantages.⁶¹¹ Musicians from this section – often referred to as ‘Black o’ town’ – were schooled in the blues, gospel music and work songs that they played or sang mostly by ear.⁶¹² Thus, the city had two distinct musical styles and two very different approaches to composition and performance. Memorisation and improvisation characterised the west side bands; sight-reading and correct performance were characteristic of Creole bands. The multiplicity of ethnic, cultural, and musical conditions needed to spawn jazz – i.e., the coming together of

⁶⁰⁵ Sacramento New Orleans Hot Jazz Society, *Sacramento New Orleans Hot Jazz Society* (Sacramento: Sacramento New Orleans Hot Jazz Society, 1972), 2.

⁶⁰⁶ P. Finkleman., *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 19.

⁶⁰⁷ S. K. Bernard., *Swamp Pop: Cajun and Creole Rhythm and Blues* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 42.

⁶⁰⁸ R. Sandke., *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 12

⁶⁰⁹ R. Sandke., *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 50.

⁶¹⁰ R. Campanella, M. Campanella., *New Orleans Then and Now* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing, 1999), 22.

⁶¹¹ I. Soto, V. S. Johnson., *Western Fictions, Black Realities: Meanings of Blackness and Modernities* (Berlin: LIT Verlag Münster, 2011), 239.

⁶¹² Ibid.

cultures in one place - was unique to the United States, and as has been argued by scholars and commentators, specifically to New Orleans.⁶¹³

Widespread focus on New Orleans as the cradle of jazz, however, has often inhibited enthusiasts and more significantly jazz historians from adequately considering the complexities of the music's lineage. Based on the bulk of writing that deals with the birth of jazz, one would be forgiven for believing that it was conceived in a kind of historical vacuum – i.e., New Orleans during the first decade of the twentieth century - in which all of its elements were cultivated and subsequently woven together into an art form. But the reality is far different. In fact, as author and music critic Stuart Nicholson has pointed out, the essential elements fused together to form early jazz compositions – in particular, the blues, ragtime, brass band marches, work songs, minstrel music, spirituals and hymns – were not exclusive to New Orleans. Rather, variations of these styles were abundant in the United States, known well in an array of cities, including Chicago,⁶¹⁴ New York and Boston long before the turn of the century. In some instances, the influences for these forms, notably religious music, can be traced back to the country's emergent slave trade that began during the mid-seventeenth century.⁶¹⁵

More importantly, it is here that the cultural and philosophical impetuses for jazz were initially harnessed. The arrival of the first enslaved blacks to the Virginia Colony in 1620, and subsequent influxes to Massachusetts, New Amsterdam (present day New York), and Connecticut brought European and African – both sacred and secular (worldly) - cultural forms into regular contact in the north of America.⁶¹⁶ Significantly, at this time music was viewed by the first Puritan settlers in Massachusetts as primarily functional; seeking to civilise

⁶¹³ Burton W. Peretti, *The Creation of Jazz: Music, Race, and Culture in Urban America* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 22.

⁶¹⁴ Chicago and the father of ragtime, Scott Joplin: Jazz historian, Floyd Levin asserts that the legitimate descendent of ragtime was jazz, and that its major advocates in the formation years such as Jelly Roll Morton, Tony Jackson, and Clarence Williams all took inspiration from playing styles conceived and developed by Joplin in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Chicago.

⁶¹⁵ S. Nicholson, 'Fusions and Crossovers' in M. Cooke., D. Horne., *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). 217.

⁶¹⁶ Jessie Carney Smith, Joseph M. Palmisano, *Reference library of Black America, Volume 1* (Detroit: Gale Group, Inc., 2000), 1.

their slaves in the white image, psalmody, as the first musical form accepted in the new world, took on an educational and religious significance.⁶¹⁷ In this sense, the Puritans utilised it in efforts to convert blacks to Christianity: conversion of perceived 'heathens' being viewed as a duty to God.⁶¹⁸

In response to this, the first instance of black resistance came to fruition.⁶¹⁹ In this respect, resistance took on the form of a quest for freedom of individual expression supported by group interaction. This was achieved through private worship, preaching, prayers, writings, revolts and rebellion, chants, African customary law and spirit songs.⁶²⁰ Whites vehemently opposed many of these practices and blacks were repeatedly punished for utilising them. However, in one form or another they remained a constant in American culture, albeit on the fringes. A testament to the staunchness with which early slaves in Massachusetts perpetuated their heritage lies in the later influence of these heritages on white social and cultural practices such as dancing and singing in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Boston.⁶²¹

In a general sense, influential figures in Massachusetts, and later Boston, played a significant role in the development of music in America during its first three centuries. In addition to the establishment of early standards for religious music by Puritans, during the nineteenth century wealthy Boston Brahmins redefined the cultural field by engaging in dialogue that pertained to not just the place of music in the city but its impact on social dynamics across America.⁶²² The Brahmin class associated themselves with the Puritanical ideas of their forefathers and determined that certain types of music were enriching and

⁶¹⁷ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992). 5-15.

⁶¹⁸ The general consensus amongst white colonial settlers in Virginia, New Amsterdam, Connecticut, and Amsterdam was that black slaves were soulless heathens, incapable of spirituality.

⁶¹⁹ Merle Eugene Curti, *The Growth of the American Thought* (Transaction Publishers, 1957), 16.

⁶²⁰ Henry J. Richardson (III.), *The origins of African-American interests in international law* (Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2008), 34.

⁶²¹ Helen Walker-Hill, *From Spirituals to Symphonies: African-American Women Composers and Their Music* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 10.

⁶²² Boston Public Library. The Arts - Nonfiction. Call # BROWN ML102 .P66C66 2003 v.1. David Horn, Dave Laing, Paul Oliver, Peter Wicke, *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World Part 1 Performance and Production, Volume 2* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2003), 640.

morally superior.⁶²³ Supporting a pantheon of classical composers - including Haydn, Handel, Beethoven, and Mozart⁶²⁴ - the Brahmins cultivated and presided over a cultural hierarchy that was underpinned by a perceived canon of superior music.⁶²⁵ In this sense, the Brahmins, much like the Puritans before them, defined not just good taste and practice but also the cultural margins. These margins remained stable well in to the early decades of the twentieth century, and served as the arenas in which perceived unsophisticated and primitive forms of music, such as the blues and jazz were developed in Boston.⁶²⁶

This chapter analyses the impact of early psalmody in Massachusetts through to the emergence of instrumental music in the nineteenth century, highlighting the ways in which imported European and African elements were utilised, and subsequently developed and on occasion fused to shape new musical forms and modes of expression. It is my contention that in tracing broader cultural transitions over the course of three centuries, this chapter will show how the early colony of Massachusetts and later the city of Boston played a significant role in shaping and in some instances defining the standards that came to greatly influence white and black music across America.⁶²⁷

⁶²³ Harvard University Library: Widener Library - Harvard Depository. Call # P 120.7. No Author Attributed, 'The Athenaeum: Reviews'. *The Athenæum: A Journal of Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, Music, and the Drama*, Volume 2. 1843.

⁶²⁴ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992).

⁶²⁵ Paul DiMaggio, 'Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America', *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982 4, 33-50.

⁶²⁶ Roxbury Community College Library, Boston. Circulating Stacks; Special Collection. Call # HN80 .B7 W8 1970B. *The Residents and Associates of the South End House*, Edited by Robert Archey Woods, *The City Wilderness: A Settlement Study* (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1898), 368 – 387.

⁶²⁷ Harvard University Library; Widener Library, Harvard Depository. Call # HM258 .M42x. Paul DiMaggio, 'Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America', *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982 4, 33-50.

2. From Psalmody to Slave Song and beyond: Melding cultures and restricting expression in Massachusetts and New England, 1620-1860

Boston, Massachusetts, was born out of a hope for change, or as Mark R. Schneider asserts, 'as a result of a dream of purity'.⁶²⁸ As England plunged into religious strife during the second half of the sixteenth century, austere Puritans of Calvinist faith, believing in the predestination of souls beyond the influence of King or Canterbury sought to move away from monarchical Protestantism and purify the Anglican Church of all vestiges of pomp, Pope, and privilege.⁶²⁹ Thus in 1620, the first trickle of immigrants, including members of the separatist Leiden congregation, made their way to the new world from Plymouth, England on the Mayflower to establish the aptly named Plymouth colony, some forty miles south of present day Boston.⁶³⁰ A decade later, wealthy English Puritan lawyer John Winthrop gazed out on the promontory land of the Shawmut Peninsula, an area surrounded by the Massachusetts Bay and the Charles River, and declared to a thousand Puritans before him, 'we shall be as a City upon a Hill, with the eyes of all people upon us'.⁶³¹ This declaration marked the first significant step toward the establishment of a New England.

In a cultural sense, little was new about the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies, however. Rather, their establishment by English pilgrims marked a continuation of European cultural forms being transferred across the Atlantic that had begun with the 1492 Spanish Conquest of America.⁶³² In addition to carrying drums and trumpets of the period,⁶³³ some of

⁶²⁸ M. R. Schneider., *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 3.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Francis Newton Thorpe ., *Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America*, compiled and edited under the Act of Congress of June 30, 1906, Washington, D.C. Signed: November 11, 1620. Available: <http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/compact.html>. Accessed: March 12, 2013.

⁶³¹ The Religious Freedom Page: Virginia Library. Governor John Winthrop 'A Model of Christian Charity', (1630 on board the Arbella). Available: <http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/charity.html>. Accessed: September 9, 2013.

⁶³² Harvard University Library. Music. Call # 001460221 Howard Decker Mckinney, *Music and man: a general outline of a course in music appreciation based on cultural backgrounds* (New York: American Book Co., 1948), 48.

⁶³³ Boston Public Library: Nonfiction. Call # 2358.7R. William S. Russell, *Pilgrim Memorials, and Guide to Plymouth With A Lithographic Map and Eight Copperplate Engravings* (Boston: Crosby, Nichols and Co., 1855), 98.

the passengers aboard the Mayflower's maiden voyage also carried an understanding of standardised western musical attributes that had been developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁶³⁴ This understanding included knowledge of major and minor melodic scales,⁶³⁵ modalities, duple and triple meters, and rhythms.⁶³⁶ More significantly, however, the pilgrims aboard the Mayflower and the many ships that followed in the years thereafter also carried with them psalm-books from which to sing.⁶³⁷

Scholars, including Hans J. Hillerbrand, assert that the first complete metrical Psalter in England was published in 1562.⁶³⁸ Known as 'The Sternhold and Hopkins' Psalter, so called because it was started in 1550 by Thomas Sternhold and later edited by a committee chaired by John Hopkins, was transferred from English towns and cities to colonies in the new world.⁶³⁹ Psalms were said to have been favoured to hymns, which were also in use in England during the period, because the pilgrims believed that the latter had no scriptural basis.⁶⁴⁰ Notably, the Psalter that arrived in Plymouth on the Mayflower was in its own way unique. It had been specially prepared (i.e., as Timothy Duguid notes, 'Englished' in prose and metre, and set to livelier music than had been heard before)⁶⁴¹ and published eight years earlier in 1612 for the fugitive congregations of Separatists in Holland⁶⁴² by Henry Ainsworth.⁶⁴³ Of

⁶³⁴ David Ware Stowe, *How Sweet the Sound: Music in the Spiritual Lives of Americans* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004), 27.

⁶³⁵ South End Branch Library, Boston Public Library. Reference - In Library Use Only, Call #:REF ML100 .H37 2003. Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2003), 519-521.

⁶³⁶ Joseph Machlis, , *Music: Adventures in Listening* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 15.

⁶³⁷ Andover-Harvard Theological Library. Pamphlets. Call # M;2117;.Z9. Society of Mayflower Descendants, *Psalms as Sung by the Pilgrims at Leyden and Plymouth 1620-21. Rendered at the Dinner at the Stratford, Philadelphia by the Choir of Calvary Presbyterian Church Directed by Mr. James Warrington February 16th, 1900* (Philadelphia, Circa. 1900).

⁶³⁸ Boston Public Library, Central. Reference Library. Call # REF BX4811.3 .E53 2004 v.1. Hans J. Hillerbrand, *Encyclopedia of Protestantism: 4-volume Set* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 767.

⁶³⁹ Harvard University Library. Expand Andover-Harv. Theology Library. Call # ML3111.F6 T4 1940. Henry Wilder Foote, *Three centuries of American hymnody* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1940), 12-14.

⁶⁴⁰ Calel Johnson's MayflowerHistory.com, 'Church and Religion'. Available: <http://mayflowerhistory.com/religion>. Accessed: June 20, 2015.

⁶⁴¹ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music. Call # ML3131.2 .D84 2014. Timothy Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice: English 'Singing Psalms' and Scottish 'Psalm Buiks', c. 1547-1640* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014), 125.

⁶⁴² Holland being the place where a group of early Separatists had fled persecution in England to live in 1608, before finally settling in Leiden in 1610.

⁶⁴³ Boston Public Library: The Arts, BPL. Call # MUSIC M2117 .M976. Henry Ainsworth, *The Music of Henry Ainsworth's Psalter* (Amsterdam, 1612).

significance here is an entry in Edward Winslow's *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, where he notes on July 20, 1620 the departure of members of the congregation for the untried shores of America.⁶⁴⁴ In addition to recounting the main events of the day, he also makes mention of the important role music played in boosting morale amongst those left behind:

They that stayed at Leyden feasted us that were to go at our pastor's house, (it) being large; where we refreshed ourselves, after tears, with singing of Psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many of our congregation very expert on music; and indeed it was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard.⁶⁴⁵

Without question, song in worship was one of the most cherished and characteristic customs of early colonial life.⁶⁴⁶ Most who arrived to the new world brought with them affection for psalmody. And while the Ainsworth Psalter at Plymouth was abandoned by members of the settlement when it was merged with the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1692,⁶⁴⁷ its seventy-year usage is rather telling. In one respect, the Massachusetts Bay Colony's adoption of 'The Sternhold and Hopkins' Psalter can be viewed as an early example of the successful transference and long-term upholding of European cultural, and of course religious, influences. More significantly, however, the preferred hymnal of the Plymouth colony can also been seen to have served to exemplify the first notion of an independent, self-determining streak amongst the settlers.

Eight years after the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1628, the first enslaved blacks, a small group of thirty-nine, arrived in Boston from the West Indies aboard a ship that contained a cargo of cotton and tobacco.⁶⁴⁸ Prior to this time, the settlers relied on the slavery of Pequot Indians. The Pequot had laid claim to the land long before the arrival of

⁶⁴⁴ Harvard: Harvard Widener Depository. Call # US 2607.25 vol.6) Edward Winslow, governor of Plymouth colony, *Hypocrisie unmasked; a true relation of the proceedings of the governor and company of the Massachusetts against Samuel Gorton of Rhode Island, Reprinted from the original edition issued at London in 1646; with an introduction by Howard Millar Chapin* (Providence: the Club for Colonial Reprints, 1916).

⁶⁴⁵ Andover-Harvard Theological Library. Pamphlets. Call # ML200.2 .P7 1921. Edward Winslow in Waldo Selden Pratt and Henry Ainsworth, *The Music of the Pilgrims: A Description of the Psalm Book brought to Plymouth in 1620* (Boston: O. Ditson Co., c.1921), 6.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁴⁸ K. Sichel., E. B. Gaither., Boston University Art Gallery., *Black Boston: documentary photography and the African American experience* (Boston: Boston University Art Gallery, 1994), 25.

John Winthrop, but circa 1638, following disagreements over punitive terms, they were vanquished and forced into slavery.⁶⁴⁹ However, they made for poor slaves and as a result were shipped to Bermuda in exchange for African bondsmen.⁶⁵⁰ Just three years later following the arrival of these bondsmen to the colony, Massachusetts Bay became the first place in New England to accord legal status to slavery.⁶⁵¹ The 1641 'Body of Liberties',⁶⁵² a legal code specifically designed to protect individual rights detailed instances of guidance for the courts of the time. Amongst them was the prohibition of bond 'slaverie'; 'villenage'; or 'captivie' among the settlers.⁶⁵³ Under section 91, it states:

There shall never be any bond slavery, villeinage, or captivity amongst us unless it be lawful captives taken in just wars, and such strangers as willingly sell themselves or are sold to us. And these shall have all the liberties and Christian usages which the law of God established in Israel concerning such persons cloth morally require. This exempts none from servitude who shall be judged thereto by authority.⁶⁵⁴

Interestingly, scholars including A. Leon Higginbotham, have noted that while three types of outlawing were present, at the same time three types of bondage were legislatively authorised.⁶⁵⁵ Massachusetts colonists could 'rightly enslave those captured in just wars, strangers who were voluntarily or involuntarily sold into slavery, and those individuals who were required by 'Authortie' to be sold into servitude'.⁶⁵⁶ As Higginbotham notes, but 'When did a war become just? And which people were strangers? And under what conditions could the authorities sentence someone to servitude?'⁶⁵⁷ William Sumner, a Liberal American academic of the nineteenth century, argued that bondage and the trading of human beings

⁶⁴⁹ Katherine Howlett Hayes, *Slavery before Race: Europeans, Africans, and Indians at Long Island's Sylvester Manor Plantation, 1651-1884* (New York: NYU Press, 2009), 29.

⁶⁵⁰ Virginia Bernhard, *Slaves and Slaveholders in Bermuda, 1616-1782* (Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 29.

⁶⁵¹ George Henry Moore, *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts* (Bedford, Massachusetts: Applewood Books, 2008), 12.

⁶⁵² Andover-Harvard Theological Library. Pamphlets. Call # E83 Old *The body of liberties. The liberties of the Massachusetts colonie in New England*, 1641. (Boston, Directors of the Old South Work, 1905).

⁶⁵³ Ibid

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ A. L. Higginbotham., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process. The Colonial Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 60-5.

⁶⁵⁶ Andover-Harvard Theological Library. Pamphlets. Call # E83 Old *The body of liberties. The liberties of the Massachusetts colonie in New Engalnd*, 1641. (Boston, Directors of the Old South Work, 1905).

⁶⁵⁷ A. L. Higginbotham., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process. The Colonial Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 62.

morally repulsed the Puritans.⁶⁵⁸ However, in considering the aforementioned, such a suggestion is questionable, simply because their willingness to allow a member of the colony to partake in the international slave trade was hardly indicative of a people repulsed.

The significance of the 'Body of Liberties' in the broader narrative of America's long slave history is that it set a precedent for divine law, the will of the people, and the need to safeguard public order that was adopted and appropriated in many northern American towns and cities.⁶⁵⁹ In 1643, it was incorporated into the Articles of the New England Confederation, a short-lived military alliance of the English colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven.⁶⁶⁰ Ironically, New England had formal, legal slavery a full generation before it was established in the South. Not until 1664 did Maryland declare that all blacks held in the colony, and all those imported in the future, would serve for life, as would their offspring.⁶⁶¹

The forced migration of great numbers of blacks as slaves to the various parts of America more significantly also marks what ethnomusicologist, Bruno Nettl describes as one of the truly important developments in the history of world music.⁶⁶² In conjunction with Nettl, music scholars, including Daniel Hardie, have written extensively about the ways in which forced migration set the stage for the development of folk, Latin, and in particular jazz music.⁶⁶³ It brought two distinct cultures – European and African – into 'intimate' contact in the New World and what evolved from that 'had an impact on the strata of twentieth-century music in the west and elsewhere'.⁶⁶⁴ The widespread musical interchange between Europe and

⁶⁵⁸ A. L. Higginbotham., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process. The Colonial Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 62.

⁶⁵⁹ Harvard University Library. Law School Library. Law. Call # KF9223 .M38 1993. Edgar J. McManus, *Law and Liberty in Early New England: Criminal Justice and Due Process, 1620-1692* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 14-15.

⁶⁶⁰ David D. Hall., H. Amory, ed., *Bibliography and the Book Trades: Studies in the Print Culture of Early New England* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, 2011), 106.

⁶⁶¹ Oscar Reiss, *Blacks in Colonial America* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1997), 105. In light of this, the 'Body of Liberties' was amended in 1670 to also incorporate the future offspring of slaves into servitude. Christopher Cameron, 'The Puritan Origins of Black Abolitionism in Massachusetts' *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Vol. 39 - 1 & 2: 2011. 84.

⁶⁶² Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 335.

⁶⁶³ Daniel Hardie, *The Ancestry of Jazz: A Musical Family History* (New York: iUniverse, 2004), 39.

⁶⁶⁴ Bruno Nettl, Gerard Henri Béhague, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1973), 207-8.

America subsequently generated a single transatlantic musical culture throughout much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that was tinged with black influences.⁶⁶⁵ Nettl asserts that African heritages are:

...major forces in everyday musical life; and their effect on composers of art music in the United States and Latin America as well as on such Europeans as Antonin Dvorak and Igor Stravinsky has been considerable.⁶⁶⁶

Everywhere throughout America from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, black and white cultural forms were in constant contact.⁶⁶⁷ When one reflects on musical acculturation within the context of slave oppression, it can be seen to have taken on three separate forms: the learning outright of white songs and white performance practices; the superimposing of these learned white practices on to black songs; and conversely, the superimposing of learned white songs on to black performance practices. A particular example in this respect is the way in which some slave owners went as far as to have their slaves taught to play European-style music for white audiences.⁶⁶⁸ Conversely, however, there are many instances in which such acculturation served to influence the development of white culture. For example, as early as the seventeenth century, black musicians performed English ballads in a distinctively African-American style, which incorporated nuanced singing, distinct rhythms, and musicianship that was later adopted and appropriated by whites.⁶⁶⁹

The basis for such acculturation has its roots in the earliest notion of white religious superiority in the New World,⁶⁷⁰ in particular, a desire amongst the first colonial settlers of Massachusetts to uphold a lifestyle that was in keeping with the Puritan frame of mind.⁶⁷¹ In 1641, minister, Samuel Willard (1640–1707) argued that ‘a contingent of unconverted

⁶⁶⁵ Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, Mass.:Harvard University Press, 2003), 26.

⁶⁶⁶ Bruno Nettl and Gerard Henri Béhague, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1973), 208.

⁶⁶⁷ Christopher Cameron, ‘The Puritan Origins of Black Abolitionism in Massachusetts’, *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Vol. 39 (1 & 2), Summer 2011. 82-3.

⁶⁶⁸ Jessica Kross, *American Eras, 1600-1754: The Colonial Era* (Michigan: Gale Research, 1998), 71.

⁶⁶⁹ Darlene Clark Hine, William C. Hine, Stanley Harrold, *The African-American Odyssey Media Research Update* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004), 63.

⁶⁷⁰ A.M. Cromwell, *The Other Brahmins, Boston's Black Upper Class* (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1946), 26.

⁶⁷¹ Boston Public Library: The Arts – Non-Fiction. Call # MUSIC ML3556 .S65 1994. Christopher Small, *Music of the Common Tongue: Survival and Celebration in African American Music* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 32.

strangers among Puritans might bring God's wrath on their holy experiment'.⁶⁷² In light of this, Puritans began converting black inhabitants to Christianity.⁶⁷³ At the Puritan Church of Dorchester, then a separate town from Boston, a slave woman belonging to a Reverend Stoughton was baptised.⁶⁷⁴ John Winthrop wrote of this woman that she was 'well approved by divers of experience for sound knowledge and true godliness'.⁶⁷⁵ Conversion continued into the eighteenth century under the supervision of minister, Cotton Mather (1663 – 1723). Mather was particularly pivotal in establishing rules for the practice, as well as documenting the lives of blacks who had been Christianised in the Puritan image.⁶⁷⁶

Converted blacks were expected to adhere to a stringent set of rules that included attendance to church and segregated participation in ceremonies, as well as the recitation of catechisms from the New England or Negro Christianised doctrines.⁶⁷⁷ The significance of this commitment to conversion is that it differed from the practices of the mid-Atlantic and Southern states.⁶⁷⁸ Whereas conversion was seen throughout New England as a way to civilise and educate, in the latter regions leaders sought to inhibit religious practice, believing that worship was an unnecessary concession that would eventually lead to unrest and slave rebellion; the duty of blacks was to work and as such, there was little consideration for religious and social conditioning.⁶⁷⁹ As one Anglican clergyman from the Virginia colony noted in a 1670 letter to his English superiors, 'the vast majority of southern Anglican masters and

⁶⁷² Christopher Cameron., 'The Puritan Origins of Black Abolitionism in Massachusetts'. *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Vol. 39 - 1 & 2: (2011): 84.

⁶⁷³ R. Todd Romero, *Making War and Minting Christians: Masculinity, Religion, and Colonialism in Early New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 91.

⁶⁷⁴ Harvard University Library. Lamont Library. Call # E185 .F825 1967. John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: a History of Negro Americans* (New York: Knopf, 1967), 107-110.

⁶⁷⁵ John Winthrop, Richard S. Dunn, James Savage, Laetitia Yeandle., *The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630-1649* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1996), 347.

⁶⁷⁶ Harvard University Library: Houghton. Special Collections. Call # *AC7 M4208 706n. Cotton Mather, *The Negro christianized. An essay to excite and assist that good work, the instruction of Negro servants in Christianity* (Boston: P. Green, 1706).

⁶⁷⁷ Toyin Falola, *Encyclopedia of the Middle Passage* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007) 323.

⁶⁷⁸ Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005) 53-56.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

mistresses were not merely indifferent but positively hostile to any and all attempts to convert their slaves'.⁶⁸⁰

In contrast, during his time as Minister at Boston's Old South Church from 1678-1707, Samuel Willard, remarked that 'there is a duty of love which masters owe to their servants'.⁶⁸¹ Throughout New England this duty, as Christopher Cameron notes, can be seen to have extended to both the physical and spiritual wellbeing of slaves; i.e., blacks were expected to receive the message of God, be 'saved', and thereafter demonstrate their new Christian state by being 'good' slaves.⁶⁸² While there are instances in which black slaves passionately resisted Christianity, there are also instances in which the gospel message (in both psalmody and preaching) was received in a manner that was not anticipated by the colonists. In this sense, blacks took the liberating word of God and appropriated it into a nuanced form of music, which would later become the black spiritual.

The Negro adoption of spiritual forms suggested to whites a submission to European-based ideology. As such, the black practice of singing the gospel in a distinctive way was considered by many slave owners to be less overtly African and thus in turn less threatening.⁶⁸³ However, the praise that blacks were expressing towards God in this music was largely superficial.⁶⁸⁴ Rather, the freedom of expression that spiritual singing granted them was used as a mean to communicate in their native tongues and through codes subversive messages of support, unity, and revolt⁶⁸⁵—a further example of how blacks imposed their own ideas on to white culture.⁶⁸⁶ This practice was refined over a number of decades and eventually came to provide the means in the nineteenth century with which directions for escaping on the

⁶⁸⁰ Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 55.

⁶⁸¹ K. Sichel., E. B. Gaither., Boston University Art Gallery., *Black Boston: documentary photography and the African American experience* (Boston: Boston University Art Gallery, 1994), 82.

⁶⁸² Christopher Cameron., "The Puritan Origins of Black Abolitionism in Massachusetts" *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Vol. 39 - 1 & 2: (2011): 84.

⁶⁸³ Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: Music and the American Civil War* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 177-9.

⁶⁸⁴ Harvard University Library. Widener Library; WID-LC. Non-fiction. Call # E447 .E53 2007. Junius P. Rodriguez, ed., *Encyclopedia of Slave Resistance and Rebellion, Volume 1* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007) 337.

⁶⁸⁵ Sherry Sherrod DuPree, Herbert Clarence DuPree, *African-American Good News (gospel) Music* (Virginia: Middle Atlantic Regional Press, 1993), vi.

⁶⁸⁶ Geneva Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America Front Cover* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 48

‘underground railroad’⁶⁸⁷ - a secret network of people, places and routes that provided shelter and assistance to escaping slaves – were shared.⁶⁸⁸

The black spiritual allowed for a back-and-forth dialogue that often-boosted morale, as well as the passing of judgement on their masters and overseers.⁶⁸⁹ This was achieved through a process of a learned code based on fine distinctions and metaphors, incorporated slants and derogatory slang.⁶⁹⁰ This approach was largely adopted by blacks across America. For example, animals or figures from the Bible such as ‘Pharaoh’ were used to represent the master and overseer.⁶⁹¹ Often unable to decipher the subject matter of the songs, slave owners convinced themselves that the tunes were simply psalms, and the words from hymnbooks.⁶⁹² In this version of ‘Hoe Emma Hoe’, for example, the overseer is the ‘possum’:

Caller: Now see that possum he works hard.

Chorus: Hoe Emma Hoe, you turn around dig a hole in the ground, Hoe Emma Hoe.

Caller: But he can't work as hard as me.

Chorus: Hoe Emma Hoe, you turn around dig a hole in the ground, Hoe Emma Hoe.

Caller: He sits a horse just as pretty as can be.

Chorus: Hoe Emma Hoe, you turn around dig a hole in the ground, Hoe Emma Hoe.

Caller: He can ride on and leave me be.⁶⁹³

Analogies in these songs also stretched to connections between potent themes in the bible and the poor conditions of slavery. References to the Promised Land were often used by Southern slaves to denote the perceived safe havens of northern regions, particularly Massachusetts and New England; parallels were often drawn between the Jews’ bondage in Egypt and the plight

⁶⁸⁷ The Underground Railroad was operated by prominent black abolitionist and humanitarian, Harriett Tubman. An escaped slave herself, led hundreds of enslaved people to freedom.

⁶⁸⁸ A notable example the nature of these songs is ‘Steal Away’, which was originally used by Virginia slave, Nat Turner as a signal to call people together to talk about their plans. Harvard University Library. Widener Library; WID-LC. Non-fiction. Call # E450 .H855 2006. J. Blaine Hudson, *Encyclopedia of the Underground Railroad* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2006), 284.

⁶⁸⁹ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music Library. Muisic. Call # Mus 532.16. Vicki Lynn Eaklor, *American Antislavery Songs: A Collection and Analysis* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1988), xxiv.

⁶⁹⁰ Harvard University Library. Widener Library-LC. cALL # GR111.A47 L49 2007 Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2007), 17.

⁶⁹¹ John Murrin, Paul Johnson, James McPherson, Alice Fahs, Gary Gerstle, Liberty, *Equality, Power: A History of the American People, Concise Edition* (Michigan: Cengage Learning, 2013), 220.

⁶⁹² James West Davidson, *Nation of Nations: A Narrative History of the American Republic* (Ohio: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 412-16.

⁶⁹³ No Author Attributed, Hoe, Emma Hoe (circa 1700). Available: Colonial Williamsburg Official Website <http://www.history.org/history/teaching/enewsletter/february03/worksongs.cfm>. Accessed: June 1, 2015.

of the black slave.⁶⁹⁴ Professor Lemuel Berry suggests that lyrics such as, 'Deep river, my home is over Jordan, Deep river, Lawd, I wan' to cross over into camp ground' defiantly express a desire to escape to the perceived betterment of North America.⁶⁹⁵

This basic tenet of striving to freedom in the north is consistent with more straightforward lyrics from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries such as, 'Come 'long gals an' let's go to Boston';⁶⁹⁶ and, 'New England! New England! / Thrice blessed and free / The poor hunted slave find a shelter in thee'.⁶⁹⁷ Walter F. Pitts notes, that the use of Old Testament references and religious analogies by slaves stems from the earliest times of colonial North America,⁶⁹⁸ and in particular the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In seeking to manifest their identity and simultaneously express the reasons why they had sought refuge in the new world, the Puritans often referred to themselves as 'Israelites', fleeing from the 'Egypt' of despotic England.⁶⁹⁹

The main element of these songs was often a call and response approach to vocal delivery. Such refinement occurred in fields and on plantations, seaport docks, and railroads

⁶⁹⁴ No Author Attributed, Hoe, Emma Hoe (circa 1700). Available: Colonial Williamsburg Official Website <http://www.history.org/history/teaching/enewsletter/february03/worksongs.cfm>. Accessed: June 1, 2015.

⁶⁹⁵ In 1670, Thomas of Boston, a free black man and an esteemed manufacturer of chairs not only established a shop in the city, but also drew up a prenuptial contract which detailed the transfer of his wealth and property after death to then wife, Katherine Negro, despite the fact that neither had acquired a surname. Three centuries on and the idea was still prevalent. In May 1904, the Colored American Magazine reprinted a Sunday Herald article that carried the headline, 'Boston, the Paradise of the Negro'. (Ibid). The article featured a number of interviews with black Bostonians who supported the idea; while in 1911, William Monroe Trotter at a convention for his National Independent Political League began proceedings with, 'Welcome to the home of abolition, where it is no crime to be black'. Professor Lemuel Berry in Megan Sullivan, 'African-American Music as Rebellion: From Slavesong to Hip-Hop'. Available from Cornell University online: http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/publicationsprizes/discoveries/discoveriesspring2001/03sullivan.pdf. Accessed: January 3, 2015. P.24.).

⁶⁹⁶ Rina Brown, *Mississippi in Spencer Crew, Lonnie Bunch III, Clement Price ed., Slave Culture: A Documentary Collection of the Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 14.

⁶⁹⁷ Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998).

⁶⁹⁸ Boston Public Library, Delivery Desk; Nonfiction - In Library Use Only. Call # BX6443 .P58 1993. Walter F. Pitts, *Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1996), 79.

⁶⁹⁹ Boston Public Library, Delivery Desk; Nonfiction - In Library Use Only. Call # BX6443 .P58 1993. Walter F. Pitts, *Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1996), 79.

across America as slaves toiled rhythmically to songs of labour and sorrow.⁷⁰⁰ Historians have not yet been able to be precise as to when and where the earliest forms of slave songs came to life,⁷⁰¹ but they have been credited as the basis for late nineteenth-century 'Afro-American music'.⁷⁰² While call-and-response is deeply embedded in African heritage,⁷⁰³ its usage and development in the new world was at times a shared practice. In 1670 as the first generation of musically trained settlers in the New England colonies passed away, the Puritans had difficulty delivering the music of the psalms. Jazz historians, Henry Martin and Keith Waters note that at this point psalm 'lining' comes to fruition.⁷⁰⁴

'Lining' is a practice whereby a line of the psalm is first sung by a Pastor and then repeated by the congregation.⁷⁰⁵ Of significance here is that the form became a significant aspect of the long and complex process in which jazz came to fruition. Out of the fusing of age-old African tribal rhythms, seventeenth-century spirituals, and hymns came forms of gospel music;⁷⁰⁶ and out of gospel developed the call-and-response strategies of Blues, jazz's closest artistic relative. From there call-and-response subsequently became one of the main elements in which riffs, an *ostinato* phrase, was used in support of one of jazz's fundamental elements, improvisation.⁷⁰⁷ As Gunther Schuller remarked:

The call-and-response format persists in jazz even today (1967) in much modified extensions. Combining with the repeated refrain structure of the blues, it found its way into the marching jazz of New Orleans and in this form began to be known as a 'riff'.

⁷⁰⁰ Harvard University Library: Andover-Harvard. Theology Library; Historical Collections -- Harvard Depository Call # 775. William Francis Allen, Charles Pickard Ware, Lucy McKim Garrison, *Slave Songs of the United States Originally Published in 1867* (New York : Dover, 1995).

⁷⁰¹ At present six-hundred songs are known, with two-hundred-and-sixty of which being published. Henry L. Taylor Jr., Walter Hill, *Historical Roots of the Urban Crisis: Blacks in the Industrial City, 1900-1950* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 89.

⁷⁰² Harvard University Library. Tozer - Harvard Depository TOZ-LC. Call # E185.89.A7 Z99 1990 FOLIO. Eileen Southern, Josephine Wright, *African-American Traditions in Song, Sermon, Tale, and Dance, 1600s-1920: An Annotated Bibliography of Literature, Collections, and Artworks* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1990), 245.

⁷⁰³ Melva Wilson Costen, *In Spirit and in Truth: The Music of African American Worship* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 48.

⁷⁰⁴ Henry Martin, Keith Waters, *Essential Jazz* (New York: Cengage Learning, 2013), 30.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Jennifer D. Ryan, *Post-Jazz Poetics: A Social History* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 4.

⁷⁰⁷ In addition to spirituals, the gospel, and call and response songs, by the turn of the nineteenth century the black repertoire also consisted of traditional and modified chanteys and field hollers—all of which have since been considered as influences in early evocations of blues and jazz music. Maximilien De Lafayette, *Buried History of American Music, Songs and Showbiz Since 1606: The Forgotten Stars* (North Carolina: lulu, 2010), 51.

From there it infiltrated the entire spectrum of jazz from the improvised solo to the arranged ensemble.⁷⁰⁸

Communication amongst blacks also extended to the use of drums.⁷⁰⁹ From Barbados to Massachusetts and beyond, drumming provided blacks with a unique voice that was, much like the early spiritual, often indecipherable to whites.⁷¹⁰ While the rhythms of African drumming were outside the parameters of religious music, throughout New England and New York in the early eighteenth century, drums became a significant part of regulated but accepted black communal events such as funerals and weddings.⁷¹¹ Drumming along with standard African cadences (distinctive resolution to the harmonies and closure to the piece) and tonality became the backbone of parades that incorporated horns, stringed instruments, and 'outlandish costumes'.⁷¹² As Peter Charles Hoffer asserts, these parades were at times aided by the noise of black onlookers, who added their own accompaniments, which consisted of expressions of joy and at times sorrow through shouting, hand clapping, and singing.⁷¹³

However, in the first half of the eighteenth century, drumming became synonymous with revolt, both on land and on slave ships and was subsequently prohibited.⁷¹⁴ In 1740, the South Carolina Negro Act was drawn up which stipulated the outlawing of '...beating drums, blowing horns or the like which might on occasion be used to arouse slaves to insurrectionary activity'.⁷¹⁵ It also added that, 'It is absolutely necessary to the safety of this province that all due care be taken to restrain Negroes from using or keeping drums'.⁷¹⁶ Since most states of the

⁷⁰⁸ Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 17-19.

⁷⁰⁹ E. Opong in Lewis Asimeng-Boahene, Michael Baffoe, *African Traditional And Oral Literature As Pedagogical Tools* (North Carolina: IAP, 2013), 254.

⁷¹⁰ Peter A. Roberts, *From Oral to Literate Culture: Colonial Experience in the English West Indies* (Press University of the West Indies, 1997), 25-26.

⁷¹¹ Judith Wragg Chase, *Afro-American art and craft* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1971), 51-54.

⁷¹² Peter Charles Hoffer, *Cry Liberty: The Great Stono River Slave Rebellion of 1739* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 48-49.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

⁷¹⁴ This rhythmical language was on occasion used to orchestrate revolts, both on land and on slave ships, a notable example being The Stono Rebellion of 1739 in the colony of South Carolina. Mark Knowles, *Tap Roots: The Early History of Tap Dancing* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2002). 39-40.

⁷¹⁵ The South Carolina Negro Act of 1740 in Gus Giordano, *Anthology of American jazz dance* (Chicago: Onion Publishing House, 1978), 37.

⁷¹⁶ 1740 Slave Code of South Carolina, Articles 34-37. Published: 1740. Available online at Duhaime Law Museum: <http://www.duhaime.org/LawMuseum/LawArticle-1501/1740-Slave-Code-of-South-Carolina-Articles-34-37.aspx>. Accessed: January 18, 2015.

time patterned their laws on those of South Carolina and Virginia, the outlawing of African drumming was far-reaching;⁷¹⁷ in fact, the ban was adopted even as far away as slave-holdings in Jamaica.⁷¹⁸

The 1740 South Carolina Negro Act served not only to exert white dominance over black slaves by first restricting their abilities to communicate, but also to weaken their ties to musical styles that were intrinsically linked to their heritage.⁷¹⁹ But this did not inhibit blacks; rather it had the effect of compelling them to develop new and often eccentric ways to replenish the void.⁷²⁰ In particular, slaves across America found that they could imitate the complex polyrhythms associated with drumming by appropriating whatever means of rhythm-making were at hand. Thus, they contrived drum-like rhythms by using household items such as spoons, jugs, washboards, percussive surfaces, and even their own bodies.⁷²¹

This vanguard approach to music making, which brings to mind use of the household washboard in twentieth-century jazz (Spasm Bands), zydeco, skiffle, and old-time music,⁷²² gave rise to a percussive style known as 'slapping juba' or 'patting juba'.⁷²³ The *New England Journal of Black Studies* asserts that through simply using their hands, blacks across America were able to drum out intricate rhythms on their thighs, chest, and other body parts in accompaniment to the kicking, stamping, and stomping of feet.⁷²⁴ As Henry Louis Gates notes, while the 'juba' has its roots in West African step-dance, it became the precursor to the

⁷¹⁷ Mark Knowles, *Tap Roots: The Early History of Tap Dancing* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2002). 39-40.

⁷¹⁸ Mellonee V. Burnim, Portia K. Maultsby, *African American Music: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2014), 25.

⁷¹⁹ Harvard University Library. Widener Library; WID-LC Call # E185.93.N6 H47 1990. Linda Simmons-Henry, Philip N. Henry, Carol Speas, *The Heritage of Blacks in North Carolina, Volume 1* (North Carolina: North Carolina African-American Heritage Foundation, 1990), 79.

⁷²⁰ Ibid., 71.

⁷²¹ Megan Sullivan, 'African-American Music as Rebellion: From Slavesong to Hip-Hop'. Available from Cornell University online:

http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/publicationsprizes/discoveries/discoveriesspring2001/o3sullivan.pdf. Accessed: January 3, 2015. P.22.

⁷²² The washboard is used as a percussion instrument, employing the ribbed metal surface of the cleaning device as a rhythm instrument. Matt Dean, *The Drum: A History* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2012), 210.

⁷²³ Ronald M. Radano, *Lying Up a Nation: Race and Black Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 101.

⁷²⁴ New England Regional Conference, National Council for Black Studies, 'Patting Juba', *New England Journal of Black Studies*, Issues 1-5. 2002. 71.

'Charleston' dance,⁷²⁵ which in-turn became synonymous with flappers (fashionable young women who flouted conventional standards of behaviour) in Jazz Age speakeasies.⁷²⁶

The push for stricter regulations on black forms of expression coincided with middle-class complaints about clapping, shrieking, and unruly singing at evangelical revival meetings in New England⁷²⁷ churches from the 1730s through to the Second Great Awakening.⁷²⁸ These modes of expression which transcended the spiritual and the recreational (again, the 'Patting Juba') were particularly problematic for Puritans in Boston not only because they coupled the emotional ecstasy of black and white conversion experiences but also because it fused elements that were both Christian and African in order to achieve perceived ecstasy.⁷²⁹ By the 1740s, emotional singing, shouting, foot stamping, and groaning was principally associated with black worship - while the public ritual of baptism to wash away one's sins was notably a Puritan activity, with baptism seen as the sacrament of initiation or regeneration.⁷³⁰ Nearly a century after initial complaints, Methodist official and historian, John Fanning Watson in 1819 spoke of a national 'growing evil, in the practice of singing in our places of public and society worship, merry airs, adapted from old songs, to hymns of our own composing' mainly by blacks.⁷³¹

Restrictions on black worship occurred at a time when general limitations on noise were also coming into effect throughout New England, with the passing of certain laws establishing the criminalisation of noise. This process came to be viewed as a means of

⁷²⁵ Henry Louis Gates, Gene Andrew Jarrett, *The New Negro: Readings on Race, Representation, and African American Culture, 1892-1938* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007) 493.

⁷²⁶ Joseph E. Holloway, *Africanisms in American Culture* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2005) 52.

⁷²⁷ The policing of singing during worship ceremonies, again, had its roots in the previous century. For example, the singing of Quakers in 1680s New England was met with objection and attacks from Puritans. Such singing was seen to link the Quakers to the anarchical English Civil War sect, the *Ranters*. Harvard University; Episcopal Church—Periodicals. Call # 1853-54. *The Church Review and Ecclesiastical Register*, Volume VI.--1853-54., 193. Harvard University Online; Episcopal Church—Periodicals.

⁷²⁸ Colleen McDannell, *Religions of the United States in Practice, Volume 1* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 426.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ Harvard University; Episcopal Church—Periodicals. Call # 1853-54. *The Church Review and Ecclesiastical Register*, Volume VI.--1853-54., 193. Harvard University Online; Episcopal Church—Periodicals.

⁷³¹ Judith Tick Matthews., Paul Beaudoin Matthews., *Music in the USA : A Documentary Companion: A Documentary Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) 99-100.

establishing civility and as a way of maintaining orderly conduct.⁷³² For example, on October 8, 1838, Boston passed into law an ordinance that stated:

No person shall ring or cause to be rung any bell, or blow or cause to be blown any horn or other instrument, in notice of the sale of any article, or for any other purpose, in the said streets or elsewhere, unless duly licensed by the Mayor and Aldermen.⁷³³

This measure served to police the aural environment of public places and spaces, notably the street, which was the primary stage of expression, and in some instances a means of livelihood, for a number of the city's performers, both black and white.⁷³⁴ During the same year, a satirical group, the Anti-Bell-Ringing Society was formed in protest.⁷³⁵ This group purposefully ridiculed the 'spirit of ultraism in legislation' by bringing frivolous noise suits to the police courts, thus taking anti-sound laws to their extreme.⁷³⁶ Nevertheless, the influence of such legislation on sound in Boston and New England was felt far and wide; by 1913, every major city in America had some law against noise on the books.⁷³⁷

From the moment that the first settlers established the Plymouth colony, New England, and later, Boston can be seen to have played a significant role in the shaping of America's musical identity. In one respect, the Puritanical ethos of early pilgrims, coupled with sermons, tracts, and writings about good music, had a great impact on American cultural standards and development – perhaps more so than anything composed and performed by its inhabitants during this time.⁷³⁸ In another instance, however, the melding of European and African ways of life and cultures in New England ultimately gave rise to distinctive forms of

⁷³² Boston Public Library - Delivery Desk. Nonfiction - In Library Use Only. Call # KF9219 .S34 1999. John Scheb, John Scheb, II, *Criminal Law and Procedure* (New York: Cengage Learning, 2013), 359.

⁷³³ Dale Cockrel, *Demons of Disorder: Early Blackface Minstrels and Their World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 143.

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Harvard University Library. Houghton: rare books and manuscripts. Call # US 13186.1.25* Anti-Bell-Ringing Society, *Constitution of the Anti Bell-ringing Society, Instituted Oct 26, 1838*. (Boston: Henry P. Lewis., 1839).

⁷³⁶ Susan M. Ryan, *The Grammar of Good Intentions: Race and the Antebellum Culture of Benevolence* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), 9.

⁷³⁷ Andrew William Kahl, *On the Beach: Race and Leisure in the Jim Crow South* (Michigan: ProQuest LLC, 2008), 113.

⁷³⁸ Codman Square Branch Library, Boston. Nonfiction: Call #:ML3508 .A47 2001. James L. Conyers, *African American Jazz and Rap Social and Philosophical Examinations of Black Expressive Behavior* (North Carolina : McFarland, 2001), 56.

expression, such as black spiritual music.⁷³⁹ In conjunction, black efforts to perpetuate the musical nuances of their heritage over the course of three centuries served as the foundations for the ingenuity and verve that came to fruition with the dawn of emancipation.⁷⁴⁰ For example, in the aftermath of the civil war blacks found that an array of instruments, including the clarinet, the trumpet, and the bassoon were sold cheaply by disbanding military units, and were thus for the first time more available to them.⁷⁴¹ Greater access to instruments combined with the sudden liberty of leisure time that came about with emancipation thus presented blacks during the 1860s with the first opportunity to freely conceive new musical ideas based on a heritage of distinct rhythm and tonality.⁷⁴² Many of these ideas, which drew on three centuries of musical evolution, gave rise to forms such as ragtime, the blues, and of course jazz. Concurrently, however, these black forms of musical expression because of their lineage were considered by whites to be a product of slavery and black subordination. As such, they were viewed as inferior to all forms of music practiced by whites.

⁷³⁹ P. Finkleman, *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). 19.

⁷⁴⁰ African-American musicologist, Eileen Southern stated that the ability of blacks to engage with and master new instruments following the end of the American Civil War ultimately gave rise to early evocations of black music troupes and innovative forms.⁷⁴⁰ Southern asserts that the music of plantation combos during antebellum days was a forerunner of both jazz and blues. During this time, she suggests that a standard three-piece group often consisted of Fiddle, Banjo and Drums. By the late 1890s and early 1900s, however, these groups had undergone changes that are in line with the greater availability of instruments previously unattainable by blacks. Notably, the fiddle disappeared, while the clarinet and trombone were added. Furthermore, on occasion, these instruments were backed the brass bass of a tub, as well as banjo, cornet, cello, and upright bass. Harvard University Library. Tozer - Harvard Depository TOZ-LC. Call # E185.89.A7 Z99 1990 FOLIO. Eileen Southern, Josephine Wright, *African-American Traditions in Song, Sermon, Tale, and Dance, 1600s-1920: An Annotated Bibliography of Literature, Collections, and Artworks* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1990), 210.

⁷⁴¹ Furthermore, blacks also came upon many instruments such as the bugle and the fife that had simply been abandoned on the fields of battle. Roxbury Community College Library, Boston. Non-fiction; Reference - In Library Use Only Call # Z1361 .N39.S56/C.1. Dwight La Vern Smith, *Afro-American history: a bibliography, Volume 2* (California: ABC-Clio, 1974), 42.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

3. Boston, Massachusetts: initiating taste culture - high-art and the emergence of Cultural Capitalism

Contemporary popular music is made up of an array of distinct genres – rock, pop, dance, and so on - that consist of diversified styles. Within the sphere of jazz, for example, there exist formulations such as Cool, Bebop, Hard bop, and Swing as well as more eclectic forms, including Jazz Punk and Ska Jazz. But of all the differences between genres and within genres, arguably as Michael Broyles notes, the greatest distinction of all exists between the entirety of popular music and classical music, with the latter existing in a category by itself.⁷⁴³ Since the nineteenth century, classical music in the west has been surrounded by an aura of respectability that has given it a special kind of mystique.⁷⁴⁴ While popular music, notably in the modern era, serves the demands of the economic market, as Onno Bouwmeester states, nobody measures the worth of classical music in terms of its monetary value.⁷⁴⁵ Insofar as ‘Musicians in the popular music field are respected for their entertainment value but less venerated’,⁷⁴⁶ classical music is valued for a belief in its moral superiority to all other forms, and thus its players are considered to perform a purer art form.⁷⁴⁷

The early twentieth-century idea that classical music was enriching and morally superior stems from twentieth-century scholarly interest in the purposes and uses of culture. Prior to this, as David Nicholls asserts, ‘all music (excepting sacred) was principally entertaining. While some white forms were considered durable or deemed ephemeral and thus to an extent superior, largely the evaluation of music lay in its purpose as opposed to its inherent quality—or as Nicholls asserts, ‘all music (including sacred) was considered functional.’⁷⁴⁸ The emergence of defined musical distinctions is largely considered to have

⁷⁴³ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992). 10-12.

⁷⁴⁴ P. Finkleman, *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). 19.

⁷⁴⁵ Onno Bouwmeester, *Economic Advice and Rhetoric: Why Do Consultants Perform Better Than Academic Advisers?* (Gloucestershire: Edward Elgar, 2010), 16.

⁷⁴⁶ The University of Manchester Library, (Alma). Music. Call # EN66L. Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 364.

⁷⁴⁷ Lawrence Schenbeck, *Racial Uplift and American Music, 1878-1943* (Mississippi: University of Press of Mississippi, 2012), 191.

⁷⁴⁸ David Nicholls, *The Cambridge History of American Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 91-2.

been an outgrowth of the philosophical movement known as German Romanticism which occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁷⁴⁹

Romantic thought in Europe, aided by literary-minded composers and critics such as Berlioz and Schumann, assisted in glorifying the symphony as the most morally uplifting form of instrumental music,⁷⁵⁰ which inspired its adoption in America.⁷⁵¹ As DiMaggio stipulates, the emergence of European art music in urban centres during the early nineteenth century was one of the critical turning points in the development of an American musical aesthetic.⁷⁵² European Romantics placed great value on the natural world, idealised the potentialities of the common man (at times depicting him as a Promethean figure), and stressed the importance of emotion in art.⁷⁵³ Seeking to elevate symphony music to a position of secular and upright standing, critics, and propagandist writers, including 'Turnvater' Jahn and Ernst Moritz Arndt, carried the music's torch to the masses with great effect. By the mid-1840s, the symphony orchestra was considered to be on a level above all other music.⁷⁵⁴

The basis for such idealism principally stems from the notions of German self-learning through culture, which Thomas Mann described in 1931 as the 'Universal ideal of the private man'.⁷⁵⁵ On this note, Esteban Buch and Richard Miller assert that 'The image of the "cultivated man" achieving personal freedom through a study of the arts and sciences had taken shape in the days of the great Weimar classical writers', which almost certainly began with the recognition by priests of the value of personal religious experience.⁷⁵⁶ Thus, the arts

⁷⁴⁹ David Nicholls, *The Cambridge History of American Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 91-2.

⁷⁵⁰ Harvard University Library. Widener; Harvard Depository: Phillips Reading Room. Call # KSH 128. No Author Attributed, 'Correspondence'. *The Reporter*, Volume 7. Max Ascoli Reporter Magazine Company, 1952. 36.

⁷⁵¹ Harvard University Library. Widener Library; WID-LC. Call # CB415 .N56 1985bx F. Asa Briggs, *The Nineteenth century: the contradictions of progress* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1985), 44.

⁷⁵² Paul DiMaggio in Nicholas Brown, Imre Szeman, *Pierre Bourdieu: Fieldwork in Culture* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 169.

⁷⁵³ Harvard University Library. Widener Library Harvard Depository. Call # PR6037.H43 J64 1993. G. John Samuel, Institute of Asian Studies, *The Harp and the Veena: a comparative study of P.B. Shelly and C. Subramania Bharati* (Madras, India: Institute of Asian Studies, 1993), 72-3.

⁷⁵⁴ George Ripley, ed., Charles Anderson, ed., *The New American Cyclopaedia: A Popular Dictionary of General Knowledge, Volume 15* (New York and London: Dana D. Appleton, 1863), 63-4.

⁷⁵⁵ Thomas Mann in Arnold Bauer, *Thomas Mann* (New York: Ungar, 1971), 79.

⁷⁵⁶ Esteban Buch, Richard Miller, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 115.

and sciences became a corpus of extra-religious values, and in theory, this corpus was considered to be above political divisions, in addition to being available to all.⁷⁵⁷ However, in practice, this approach simply served to generate the means for demarcation; i.e., the basis to differentiate the cultured and the elite from what was perceived as the subordinate.

In looking to the past for musical tastes and standards, nineteenth-century scholars, the high-born, and wealthy philanthropists created a cultivated pantheon of composers, which included Haydn, Handel, Beethoven, and Mozart, to revere, and these composers subsequently became the barometer by which all music was judged.⁷⁵⁸ While this pantheon has been reconceptualised many times since and challenged just as much, the fundamental notion of a superior canon of musical tastes and musical institutions, via the presence of a cultural hierarchy, has persisted.⁷⁵⁹ In the nineteenth century, as Wiley Hitchcock⁷⁶⁰ asserted, the vernacular tradition of utilitarian and entertainment music was essentially ‘unconcerned with artistic or philosophical idealism’.⁷⁶¹ As such, the cultivated tradition of fine-art music, which was significantly concerned with moral, artistic, or cultural idealism’ which stemmed from European art music stood alone because it espoused idealistic concepts of progress and moral improvements.⁷⁶² As Michael Broyles notes:

Thus in the extravagant world of late nineteenth-century ostentation, the classical canon of music served as a suitable means with which those who wished to demonstrate a connection with the arts could also simultaneously believe they were fulfilling an ethical duty. A person in such circumstances need not have a clue about the inner nature of the music or feel any direct response from it. That it was morally superior was sufficient ground for supporting it. And European music seemed all the more exotic because it was three thousand miles removed and had by the late nineteenth century come to represent the same foreign elements. Perceptions about

⁷⁵⁷ Esteban Buch, Richard Miller, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 115.

⁷⁵⁸ John Sullivan Dwight, *Dwight's Journal of Music, Volumes 5-6* (South Carolina: Nabu Press, 2010), 4-7.

⁷⁵⁹ Jimi Calhoun, *The Art of God: Reflections on Music, Diversity, and the Beauty in You* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015), 71.

⁷⁶⁰ Arguably the best explanation of this duality was written in 1969 by Wiley Hitchcock, a pioneer in the field of American music studies. Hugh Wiley Hitchcock, Kyle Gann, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000).

⁷⁶¹ Jimi Calhoun, *The Art of God: Reflections on Music, Diversity, and the Beauty in You* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015), 8-15.

⁷⁶² Harvard University Library. Loeb Music Library Information. Call # ML410.L7 L562 2003. Cornelia Szabo-Knotik, 'Tradition as a Source of Progress: Franz Liszt and Historicism' in Michael Saffle, Rossana Dalmonte, *Liszt and the Birth of Modern Europe: Music as a Mirror of Religious, Political, Cultural, and Aesthetic Transformations : Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio (Como) 14-18 December 1998* (New York: Pendragon Press, 2003), 143.

the nature of instrumental music can be traced to ideas that pertained to music and religion in antebellum writing.⁷⁶³

Music culture thus took on the form of being a struggle between democratic leaning versus aristocratic leaning class groups, underpinned by the interests of hymnodic reformers. The latter argued strongly for the improvement of taste through the cultivation of superior culture, which would in turn contribute to the betterment of individuals. The reticence of distinction in music and class has led Paul DiMaggio to describe such tendencies as the ‘sacralisation of art’,⁷⁶⁴ and Lawrence Levine similarly, ‘the sacralisation of music’.⁷⁶⁵ By this, both refer to the ‘the process by which aesthetic experiences, once valued as enjoyable and diversionary, came to harbour the religious attributes of purity, edification, and worship’.⁷⁶⁶ DiMaggio’s work in particular was the precursor to Pierre Bourdieu’s argument that these elements fused together gave rise to notions of high culture superiority, which was used as a device by the dominant classes in America to invoke the ideas of Buch and Miller and similarly discriminate against and exclude perceived inferior classes.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶³ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992). 11-12.

⁷⁶⁴ Harvard University Library; Widener Library, Harvard Depository. Call # HM258 .M42x. Paul DiMaggio, ‘Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America’, *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982 4, 33-50.

⁷⁶⁵ Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (*The William E. Massey Sr. Lectures in the History of American Civilization*) (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1990).

⁷⁶⁶ Paul DiMaggio in Nancy Newman, *Good Music for a Free People: The Germania Musical Society in Nineteenth-century America* (New York: University Rochester Press, 2010), 114. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt81w8d>. Accessed: June 17, 2015.

⁷⁶⁷ The University of Manchester Library (Alma), Main Library: Culture and Philosophy. Call # DYRUQ. Pierre Bourdieu in Nicholas Brown, Imre Szeman, ed., *Pierre Bourdieu: Fieldwork in Culture* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 167.

4. The Brahmin Model and its impact on black cultural production

At the beginning of the 1830s, psalmody still prevailed in Boston. Secular instrumental concerts, largely based on the adoption of European classical music, could not be sustained.⁷⁶⁸ The latter posed a problem for leading religious factions in the city because it did not conform to the functional (educational and religious) nature of psalmody or spiritual music.⁷⁶⁹ It was deemed abstract in nature and unfettered by words; i.e., it was believed to have little fundamental – educational, religious - value to society.⁷⁷⁰ However, in the second half of the eighteenth century intellectuals and hymnodic reformers in Boston and Concord, Massachusetts appropriated ideas based on German Romanticism to elevate the position of instrumental music.⁷⁷¹ Interwoven with notions of literary transcendentalism, a theological movement based on the idea that God is an internal force, these intellectuals emphasised notions of abstractness over the direct communication of psalms, and thus the concept slowly became an idealistic current that ran through music and subsequently the entirety of American culture.⁷⁷²

At the core of this current was a desire to sustain music believed to be written in a more ‘correct’ and ‘scientific’ style.⁷⁷³ As Broyles notes, the terms ‘scientific’ and ‘correct’ are the reformers’ own and European music served as their models.⁷⁷⁴ In conjunction, Boston intellectuals and hymnodic reformers were assisted in their efforts by the city’s wealthiest

⁷⁶⁸ Timothy Swan, *Psalmody and Secular Songs, Volume 26* (Wisconsin: A-R Editions, Inc., 1997), xxiv.

⁷⁶⁹ American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, *The Eighteenth Century: A Current Bibliography, Volume 16* (Boston: American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, 1990), 202.

⁷⁷⁰ Harvard University Library. Music. Call # Call number: ML1;.B53; Online: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.ejournals:sfx2320000000018171>. Bartholomew Brown, ‘Communications: Historical Sketches’. *Boston Musical Gazette: A Semi-monthly Journal, Devoted to the Science of Music*, Volume 1. Published: Boston: Otis, Broaders & Co., 1838. 51-2.

⁷⁷¹ Christopher John Murray, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760–1850* (London: Routledge, 2013), 1149.

⁷⁷² Harvard University Library: Loeb Music Library; Isham Lib. Musical Journals. Call # 3138.367.41.193; Microfilm. No Author Attributed, ‘Our Musical Correspondence’, *New York Weekly Musical Review and Gazette*, Volume 10. 1859. 245-6.

⁷⁷³ A. P. Dobson., *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

⁷⁷⁴ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992). Introduction.

faction, the Brahmins.⁷⁷⁵ As a collective, their influence had the effect of establishing a classical, Eurocentric canon of legitimate culture in Boston, which all but ended the dominance of psalmody.⁷⁷⁶ The most significant factor here is not so much the extent to which psalmody and sacred music was resisted in Boston during the first half of the nineteenth century, but rather the extent to which it was ignored.⁷⁷⁷

In 1882, Boston music critic Louis Charles Elson stated that orchestral music in Boston was principally conceived in the Old Academy of Music. Founded in 1833 by Messrs. William C. Woodbridge, Lowell Mason, and George J. Webb, and at ‘the end of nine years it was resolved to change the character of the institution’. Instead of continuing its vocal psalmody concerts in which it cannot do more or better than its neighbours, the academy has concluded to engage the best orchestra it can afford, and give classical instrumental concerts. This proceeding meant a great deal. It practically sealed the fate of psalm singing as the chief music of Boston, and simultaneously substituted the symphony for the weaker music, which had obtained up to that time.⁷⁷⁸ Elton’s characterisation of psalmody as the weaker music summarises the bias of his generation, but more broadly the change in public preference for symphony music.⁷⁷⁹

Aided by the industrial revolution and the subsequent creation of a defined middle-class in America, many white Bostonians found themselves beneficiaries of a new economic power. With greater wealth and more importance placed on the advantages of leisure time, the Brahmins took full charge of the baton they had shared with intellectuals and hymnodic reformers and transformed culture into a form of capital. By 1870 supported by its symphony orchestras and chamber-music ensembles, the Brahmins were spearheading a superior

⁷⁷⁵ Paul DiMaggio, ‘Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America’, *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982 4, 33-50.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁷⁷⁷ The term Boston Brahmin refers to individuals of great wealth, political influence, and old New England roots. Boston Brahmins frequently intermarried, founded and patronised Boston cultural institutions, and had strong connections with Harvard University.

⁷⁷⁸ Louis Elton in John Sullivan Dwight. ‘Boston Music Hall’. *Dwight’s Musical Journal*. Published: Saturday, September 3, 1881. Vol. Xli, No. 1051. Available, the Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/dwightjournalm2odwiggoog>. Accessed: June 1, 2015.

⁷⁷⁹ Harvard University Library: Loeb Music Library. Call # Mus 105.63.10. Louis Charles Elson, *Famous composers and their works: Musical forms* (Boston: J. B. Millet, 1900).

national taste culture (high-art) that was both economically profitable and considered to be culturally superior.⁷⁸⁰ Boston thus embraced the music of Hector Berlioz, and later Brahms and Wagner, artists who were able to convert standard orchestral forms into canvases for abstract, vanguard expression that pushed the limits of performers, instruments, performance spaces, and the tastes of audiences.⁷⁸¹ The Boston Symphony Orchestra, in a concert programme from 1967, reminiscing about its rise remarked:

The industrial Revolution was fostering bourgeois communities. The prosperous tradesman, or more probably his wife, was found cultivating the arts. There began to accumulate a new phenomenon in the Western World—a potential concert public, a public in complete contrast to the social gatherings in the mansions of Vienna or Paris.⁷⁸²

The Brahmins made use of their wealth to establish influence in leading Boston institutions, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.⁷⁸³ In addition to serving the high tastes of the Brahmins and Boston's wealthy, these institutions also served to give the city a certain distinction in the fine arts.⁷⁸⁴ The Brahmins played on this and used regard for the aforementioned institutions and their cultural preferences – principally high-art, such as the symphony – to develop a cultivated sphere.⁷⁸⁵ In its establishment, this elite sphere also had the effect of defining the vernacular;

⁷⁸⁰ Music History and Literature San Francisco Conservatory of Music, John Spitzer Chair, Neal Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra : History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (New York Oxford University Press, USA, 2005), 338.

⁷⁸¹ John Murrin, Paul Johnson, James McPherson, Alice Fahs, Gary Gerstle, *Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People* (New York: Cengage Learning, 2011), 259.

⁷⁸² Harvard University Library. Loeb Music Library; Harvard Depository. Call # Mus 55.1 Boston Symphony Orchestra, 'Boston Symphony Orchestra: The Beginning', *Boston Symphony Orchestra Concert Programs.*, Volume 86, 1967. 1062

⁷⁸³ The distinction between the cultivated and the vernacular did serve throughout the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth to discern between arenas of societal significance. As such, the difference between these two forms has, for example, been used to distinguish the political from the economic. On this note, court music has been considered as different from the music of the market place, while in a similar respect, cathedral music differed from the music of the parish church, and aristocratic opera differed from folk play. Such juxtapositions have likewise been used as a tool with which people have classified themselves into elite categories; classical music has a certain synonymy with high-culture tastes and sensibilities, and thus has often been the musical choice of the elite and upper class.

⁷⁸⁴ John R. Hall, Laura Grindstaff, Ming-cheng Lo, ed., *Handbook of Cultural Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 369.

⁷⁸⁵ Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992). 10-12.

i.e., perceived unrefined and unwanted forms of culture, that were commonplace amongst non-elites, especially the working classes.⁷⁸⁶ In view of this, the Brahmins and much of the wealthiest factions in the city treated black forms of expression such as the Blues and later Ragtime and jazz in much the same way as psalmody – they chose to all but ignore them.⁷⁸⁷

On this note, by the late 1890s cultural wealth in Boston had extended into the South End, with the opening of theatres and several venues offering musical entertainment to an immigrant population, in the main made up of blacks. Amongst these establishments were three first-class theatres, comprising the Columbia, the Grand Opera House, and a smaller version of the latter, known simply as the Grand.⁷⁸⁸ By the close of 1897, however, all three of these venues had ‘failed’.⁷⁸⁹ Writing at the time, Robert Archey Woods noted that the collapse of these venues ‘illustrates very forcibly the distinctness with which the district is set off from the so-called better parts of the town’.⁷⁹⁰ He further added that the black working class population of the time needed guidance and refinement through culture far more than the residents of more favoured areas of the city.⁷⁹¹ An 1898 settlement study conducted by The Residents and Associates of Boston’s South End House notes:

Love of really good music does not yet exist to any great extent amongst local people. Their demands are fairly well satisfied by the street pianos, the band concerts, and the efforts of the poorly trained singer and musician such as are found in the cheapest amusement places.⁷⁹²

While entertainment trends around the turn of the twentieth century suggest a developing metropolitan community of blacks in the South End, the development of culture

⁷⁸⁶ Paul DiMaggio in Nancy Newman, *Good Music for a Free People: The Germania Musical Society in Nineteenth-century America* (University Rochester Press, 2010), 114. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt81w8d>. Accessed: June 17, 2015.

⁷⁸⁷ Paul DiMaggio, ‘Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: the creation of an organizational base for high culture in America’, *Media, Culture, and Society*, 1982 4, 38.

⁷⁸⁸ Roxbury Community College Library, Boston. Circulating Stacks; Special Collection. Call # HN80.B7 W8 1970B. The Residents and Associates of the South End House, Edited by Robert Archey Woods, *The City Wilderness: A Settlement Study* (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1898), 185-7.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Roxbury Community College Library, Boston. Circulating Stacks; Special Collection. Call # HN80.B7 W8 1970B. The Residents and Associates of the South End House, Edited by Robert Archey Woods, *The City Wilderness: A Settlement Study* (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1898), 185-7.

in this community can be seen to have been handled somewhat poorly.⁷⁹³ Woods notes that much blame for this rested at the feet of venue organisers. In the first instance, poorer blacks were often perhaps priced out of the leisure of entertainment, and thus it is no surprise that they were often unable to meet the price demands of the aforementioned theatres.⁷⁹⁴ Secondly, the black population in this South End was relatively small, and thus the establishment of three first-class venues in close proximity to one another meant that limited ticket sales were shared.⁷⁹⁵ This was compounded by the fact that residents of wealthier areas, in particular whites from the Back Bay and neighbouring suburbs were rarely induced to visit the South End to be entertained.⁷⁹⁶

The main problem, however, was that whites responsible for the running of these venues were unwilling to adjust their taste sensibilities to find a satisfactory way to reach and entice the black people in their vicinity. The assertions of The Residents and Associates of Boston's South End House that black tastes were unrefined and primitive was based on the subjective notion that white forms of music were of course in contrast superior. Furthermore, the claim that street performers and musicians in poorer venues delivering primitive musical forms satisfied blacks is perhaps correct; the reality is that black street musicians had nowhere else to perform. While black jazz musicians were on the stage of the Opera House in New Orleans, in Boston such an opportunity would not arrive until after the Second World War. Finally, insofar as some blacks may have taken an interest in first-class theatre and white forms of concert music, their principle interest was on the music of their heritage, which had been perpetuated over the course of three centuries.

Thus in a general respect, The Residents and Associates of Boston's South End House pay attention to the inability of blacks to assimilate and conform to the standards that were being cultivated and championed by whites rather than their staunch efforts to continue the

⁷⁹³ This community emerged in the South End of the city and nearby Cambridgeport throughout the nineteenth century

⁷⁹⁴ Roxbury Community College Library, Boston. Circulating Stacks; Special Collection. Call # HN80 .B7 W8 1970B. The Residents and Associates of the South End House, Edited by Robert Archey Woods, *The City Wilderness: A Settlement Study* (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1898), 184.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., 184-90.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid., 184-6.

development of their own culture. This notion permeated much of the early twentieth century in Boston, and became particularly evident in the 1920s. For when blacks were seen to partake in the cultural preferences of whites, they were often accepted, sometimes even lauded. Black Spiritual singer, Paul Robeson, and composer and tenor singer, Laurence Brown both received praise from the *Boston Globe* in 1926 for their contributions to music,⁷⁹⁷ with the latter referred to as a ‘unique figure in American life’;⁷⁹⁸ while in 1928, leading white composer, Rubin Goldmark delivered ‘A Negro Rhapsody’ to a full-house at Symphony Hall. The *Globe* referred to it as an ‘eloquent performance’, language incongruous with that being used in relation to blacks involved with jazz.⁷⁹⁹

5. The Black Brahmins: Boston’s Black Elites and Culture

Studies of black communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries acknowledge the existence of class differences. In his 1899 study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois noted the presence of what he defined as a small upper class of blacks, which included caterers, government clerks, teachers, professionals, and small merchants.⁸⁰⁰ Many of these individuals had significant wealth, elite education, political influence, and connections.⁸⁰¹ Similarly, Adelaide Cromwell, in her work *The Other Brahmins: Boston’s Black Upper Class, 1750-1950* notes similar professional trends in Boston, adding that the black upper class in Boston, on average, around 2% of the black population, belonged to an upper crust that was principally college-educated, attended churches, and included community leaders.⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁷ No Author Attributed., ‘Negro Singer Has Won Honours: Paul Robeson, who will sing here Next Sunday, Has Had a Remarkable Record In and Out of College, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: March 7, 1926. P. A53.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁹ No Author Attributed, “Negro Rhapsody” at Symphony Concert: Rubin Goldmark Hears Work Performed. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 20, 1928. P. 5.

⁸⁰⁰ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) pp. 124-5.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Adelaide M. Cromwell, *The Other Brahmins: Boston’s Black Upper Class, 1750-1950* (University of Arkansas Press, 1994).

This collective had, according to William B. Gatewood, ‘a reputation for exclusiveness that went even beyond those in cities such as Washington or Philadelphia’.⁸⁰³ Wealthy men, including merchant, John H. Lewis and the baker, Joseph Lee promoted old-line black families of less means like the Ruffins, Riddleys, Duprees, and Haydens. This group established a genteel way of life, complete with white servants, musical training for their children, and membership into exclusive clubs that were modelled on those of their white counterparts.⁸⁰⁴ During the early decades of the twentieth century, the cultural life of black Boston began to be dominated by this small collective of individuals and their social clubs and links to leading cultural figures and organizations.⁸⁰⁵

While the leaders of black cultural movements across America throughout the first half of the twentieth century were predominantly men, in Boston it was an all-female collective known as the League of Women for Community Service (LWCS) that made the most telling impact.⁸⁰⁶ Emerging out of the social reformist spirit of the black women’s club movement of the ‘Women’s Era’ (1880–1920)⁸⁰⁷ the LWCS, originally known as the Soldiers’ Comfort Unit, was founded in 1918⁸⁰⁸ to render ‘much needed services to Black soldiers stationed in and near Boston after World War I’.⁸⁰⁹ After the war, its head figures - including African-American educator and civic leader, Maria Louise Baldwin, suffragist, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, and newspaper editor, Florida Ruffin Ridley - ⁸¹⁰ turned their attention to the black community in

⁸⁰³ Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow 1890 – 1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 4-5.

⁸⁰⁴ Ronald E Hall, ‘Biracial Americans: The Advantages of White Blood’ in Ronald E. Hall, *An Historical Analysis of Skin Color Discrimination in America Victimism Among Victim Group Populations* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2010), 109-114.

⁸⁰⁵ Omar M. McRoberts, *Streets of Glory: Church and Community in a Black Urban Neighborhood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 31.

⁸⁰⁶ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, ‘Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston’, *Poetics* 35 (2007), 368.

⁸⁰⁷ J. Gibran, S. McDowell., *Boston Women's Heritage Trail: Seven Self-guided Walking Tours Through Four Centuries of Boston Women's History* (Massachusetts: Applewood Books, 2006). 82.

⁸⁰⁸ J. Gibran, S. McDowell., *Boston Women's Heritage Trail: Seven Self-guided Walking Tours Through Four Centuries of Boston Women's History* (Massachusetts: Applewood Books, 2006). 82.

⁸⁰⁹ The League of Women for Community Service: Celebrating More Than 90 Years of Service to the Community (Home). Available: <http://leagueofwomen.org>. Accessed: 3 July, 2014.

⁸¹⁰ Jack Salzman, David L. Smith, Cornel West, *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History, Volume 4* (London: Macmillan Library Reference, 1996), 1986.

Boston. In this respect, the LWCS began to undertake ‘civic, social, educational, and charitable work’.⁸¹¹

As blacks of status during 1920, members of the LWCS worked in conjunction with members of Boston’s small black elite, which included the likes of William L. Reed,⁸¹² and their husbands to finance the purchase of a five-storey brownstone house, located at 558 Massachusetts Avenue.⁸¹³ This was a strategic purchase, for the address lay just south of Huntington Avenue, described by Lorraine E. Roses and Crystal M. Flemming as, ‘the invisible demarcation between ethnic diversity and white homogeneity in early twentieth-century Boston’.⁸¹⁴ This avenue was home to many of the city’s structures of secular and religious culture, such as Horticultural Hall, the Christian Science Mother Church, and of particular note, Symphony Hall.⁸¹⁵ The League’s proximity to these venerable white institutions overstepped traditional cultural and social boundaries. The move was a clever one, however, and served to support an integrationist philosophy on the part of the founding members.

In the wake of this move, the LWCS, operating primarily as a non-profit organisation, amassed much respect and exercised significant leadership within black civic life in Boston.⁸¹⁶ On one hand, they continued to fulfil the role of providing comfort and aid to those in need, assisted new mothers, co-operating with the National Civic League in distributing school luncheons, and also running a daily soup kitchen, which served the needs of some ‘two hundred little boys of all races and creeds’.⁸¹⁷ However, they also utilised the space available to them at their 558 Massachusetts Avenue headquarters and offered a recreational and educational centre for young, aspiring blacks. They provided choral classes, girls’ clubs, social

⁸¹¹ Jack Salzman, David L. Smith, Cornel West, *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History, Volume 4* (London: Macmillan Library Reference, 1996), 1986.

⁸¹² No Author Attributed, \$4000 Subscribed for League Home, *Boston Herald*. Published: December 8, 1919. p. 13.

⁸¹³ F. Sawaya., *Modern Women, Modern Work: Domesticity, Professionalism, and American Writing, 1890-1950* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). 159.

⁸¹⁴ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, ‘Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston’, *Poetics* 35 (2007), 374.

⁸¹⁵ N. S. Seasholes., *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2003). 229.

⁸¹⁶ The League of Women for Community Service: Celebrating More Than 90 Years of Service to the Community (Home). Available: <http://leagueofwomen.org>. Accessed: 3 July, 2014.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

evenings, and talks on moral education.⁸¹⁸ The group actively pursued citywide recognition by organising an array of cultural projects aimed exclusively at figures of elite, academic and financial status in the city.

These projects included academic lectures, culture shows, charity functions, musical revues, and more.⁸¹⁹ Many of these events attracted in excess of two-hundred esteemed guests, and assisted in promoting the LWCS to a position of prominence in the city, especially within the South End community.⁸²⁰ The importance of the LWCS is reflected in the illustrious figures - politicians, university chairmen, reverends, anti-racialists and more, both white and black - who visited 558 during the 1920s.⁸²¹ At the formal opening of the brownstone, the League hosted guests such as former United States assistant attorney general, William H. Lewis, District attorney Pelletier, and three years before ascending to the United States Presidency, the then governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge and his wife.⁸²²

From this beginning, the LWCS pursued more elaborate explorations into the expression and celebration of black America. In March 1922, they offered up a room for a public exhibition in honour of its late and beloved president, Miss Maria L. Baldwin.⁸²³ The exhibition was a platform for the 'collection and the preservation of material relating to the history of the Negro and those who have stood for justice to the Negro'.⁸²⁴ At this exhibition and several others like it, speakers included reverends, such as Samuel M. Crothers, and Pitt Dillingham, President Emeritus of Harvard, Dr. Charles W. Elliot,⁸²⁵ and leading academics,

⁸¹⁸ The League of Women for Community Service: Celebrating More Than 90 Years of Service to the Community (Home). Available: <http://leagueofwomen.org>. Accessed: 3 July, 2014.

⁸¹⁹ No Author Attributed, 'Members of the League of Women for Community Service', *The Boston Herald*. Published: March 12, 1922. Page 5.

⁸²⁰ No Unknown Attributed, 'Soup Kitchen Remains Open at the Demand of 200 Boys', *Boston Sunday Herald*. Published: June 13, 1920. p. B4E.

⁸²¹ President Emeritus Charles W. Elliot, Reverend Samuel M. Crothers, and William H. Lewis are but three examples. No Author Attributed, 'Members of the League of Women for Community Service', *The Boston Herald*. Published: March 12, 1922. Page 5.

⁸²² No Author Attributed, 'Governor and Wife at Formal Opening', *The Boston Herald*. Published: March 20, 1920. Page 11.

⁸²³ No Author Attributed, 'Exhibition at 558 Massachusetts Avenue', *Boston Herald*. Published: March 12, 1922. p. C5.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, C5

⁸²⁵ No Author Attributed, 'Dedicates Library to Maria Baldwin', *Boston Herald*. Published: December 21, 1923. p. 14.

counting Harold K. Estabrook, and Mr John Graham Brooks.⁸²⁶ In providing a platform for intellectual discussions, poetry readings, musical revues, and short plays, the LWCS provided an arena for black expression at a time when most mainstream organisations excluded blacks.⁸²⁷

While in many respects the LWCS bore little resemblance to white Brahmins - they can hardly be considered 'entrepreneurial' in the economic sense of the term – they were able to construct a professional and privileged black elite, and can thus be considered 'culturally entrepreneurial'.⁸²⁸ These LWCS, in a similar vein to white Brahmins, used their status and modest financial resources to encourage the cultivation and professional nurturing of sophisticated black artistic expression. In ways that mirror the work of the Brahmin founders of the Museum of Fine Arts and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the women of the LWCS shared a broad, ambiguous commitment to communitarian outreach, and in conjunction created a non-profit, charitable organisation that contributed to the construction of aesthetic distinctions between the cultivated (high-culture) and the vernacular (popular culture).⁸²⁹

There are, however, obvious differences between the two groups of entrepreneurs. The LWCS were not nearly as financially advantaged, socially connected or influential as their Anglo-American counterparts were. White elites were centrally located at the heart of Boston's power structure while black elites were relegated to the periphery. As such, they were much more constrained in their ability to redefine the cultural field. Whereas white Brahmins successfully institutionalised their aesthetic sensibilities, black Brahmins were limited in the symbolic and material resources they had at their disposal. Where white elites were able to convert economic and social capital into durable cultural institutions, non-dominant African-

⁸²⁶ No Author Atributed, 'Exhibition at 558 Massachusetts Avenue', Boston Herald. Published: March 12, 1922. p. C5

⁸²⁷ Lorraine E. Roses, 'A Tale of Two Women's Organizations'. BostonBlackHistory.org. Published: 22 February, 2006.

Available: <http://academics.wellesley.edu/AmerStudies/BostonBlackHistory/history/tale.html>. Accessed: 8 June, 2014.

⁸²⁸ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35 (2007), 368.

⁸²⁹ Ibid., 368.

American elites were much more likely to bring about change through coalition building and, more infrequently, strategic partnerships with dominant Brahmins.⁸³⁰

This approach naturally had implications on the development of the Boston scene. In their efforts to propel culturally profitable black art forward and simultaneously attract the attention of Boston's white elites, the LWCS can be seen, perhaps inadvertently, to have contributed to the stifling of black cultural forms deemed low-end culture. Thus, instead of working collaboratively with the likes of band booker Harry 'Bish' Hicks, the LWCS pursued acceptance and social uplift in Boston through a commitment to establish 'good' black 'culture' that was acceptable to the tastes of elite whites. Thus, while the LWCS had the capacity to shape black contributions the cultural landscape of 1920's Boston, by opting to promote and present culture that was socially acceptable to the powerful and wealthy, they ultimately projected an outward indifference towards mass and popular culture.

In general, nineteenth-century reformers believed that musical developments followed a relatively straight line of progress; i.e., newer music was deemed qualitatively better than the music it replaced. In Boston, Brahmin interest in the arts, coupled with their efforts to create a cultural hierarchy of distinction, narrowed the boundaries between aesthetic and moral value. In doing so, they redefined the cultural sphere to suit their own tastes and preferences, and purposefully ushered unrespectable and unwanted cultural forms to the margins, where they were largely ignored. The predominance of European music in Boston can thus be viewed with both approbation and dismay. In one instance, it raised tastes and standards, and gave Boston, through philanthropy and esteemed institutions, a cultivated sphere that rivalled the best in Europe. However, the dominance of white culture in the city, accompanied by elitist attitudes, and the willingness of leading blacks to embrace said culture in the hopes of achieving a modicum of social uplift can be seen to have somewhat stifled burgeoning cultural developments amongst its small black population, which had great impetus in jazz. While in

⁸³⁰ Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, 'Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston', *Poetics* 35 (2007), 385-7.

New York, the gap between ‘good’ cultivated music and the American vernacular decreased, in Boston black musicians in the latter sphere had to overcome the limitations of not just racial discrimination, a lack of musical infrastructure, and the smallness of their community but also the perpetuation of a longstanding white concept of what good music was.

Chapter Five: constructing a history of jazz in Boston, 1919 – 1929.

1. Introduction

As has been indicated earlier, when one thinks of cities that provided a platform for the evolution of early jazz, Boston, Massachusetts rarely springs to mind. A person need only refer to the indexes of the vast array of far-reaching and overarching works that have captured the growth of the music during its halcyon period (1919-1929) to realise that the city is, for the most part, without consideration. This, of course, means that many Boston-born and Boston-based jazz players, bookers, and aficionados from this period (both black and white) are largely absent from the annals of jazz history. In light of this, one might conclude that Bostonians, such as saxophonist, Robert ‘Bobby’ Johnson, bandleader, Joseph A. ‘Joe’, and trumpeter, Jabbo Jenkins simply did not measure up musically to players heard in the margins, on the stages, and along the ethers in New Orleans, New York, Chicago and similarly potent jazz cities of the era.⁸³¹ But this is not the case. Nor is it the case that such Bostonians have been written out of history. Rather, the reality is that to date nobody has written them in.

As argued, the task here is above all to collate and order the many unsown fragments of Boston’s early jazz past and thereafter weave them together to offer insight into a largely untapped history that deals with jazz as music and as a class symbol. In the main, this will be achieved by employing, essentially, a dualistic approach to retelling that touches on Boston jazz during the formative years, its social functions and its overall legacy. Attention therefore is given first to the notion of construction. In this respect the aim is to curate an anecdotal and where possible analytical history of localised players, localised perceptions, and the impact that key events in the city – such as the 1919 murder of James Reece Europe, the then purported king of jazz – had on the music’s broader (citywide and national) appeal and development.⁸³² In addition, emphasis is placed on the notion of locating, in the midst of these

⁸³¹ An example: Will Marion Cook (1869-194) – a composer for black musical theatre in New York between 1900 and 1920. John Robert Brown, *A Concise History of Jazz* (Missouri: Mel Bay Publications, 2010), 60-61.

⁸³² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microform only; Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Jim Europe Killed in Boston Quarrel’, *The New York Times*. May 9, 1919. Page, 1.

anecdotes and analyses, significant aspects of black artistry and where achievable the presence and, significantly, the denial of a black voice. In the context of jazz culture, this is presented here as a social construct. Principally one that was perceived quite differently by those who championed the music in the city (players, promoters, listeners) and those who opposed it (the cultural elite, including the Watch and Ward Society, and the police).

2. The formative years: turn of the century musical developments in Boston, Massachusetts

The exact moment when the blue touch paper that ignited the jazz phenomena of the early twentieth century was lit is, despite many claims to the contrary, untraceable. While the foundational origins for the music can be identified as occurring at some time during the first half of the seventeenth century, the conceptual impetus for Jazz Age jazz debatably lies somewhere in amongst Emanuel Perez's emergence as a trumpeter virtuoso in 1898,⁸³³ the release of Scott Joplin's ragtime composition, 'Maple Leaf Rag' in 1899,⁸³⁴ and the surfacing of Buddy Bolden, 'The blowingest (sic) man since Gabriel' and the first purported King of jazz in 1900.⁸³⁵ This, of course, poses a particularly telling problem in terms of historical specificity. So much so, to counteract such ambiguity, many jazz historians and enthusiasts alike simply choose to bypass the discussion of origins outright and instead focus solely on developments in the Jazz Age era.⁸³⁶

Alternatively, again sidestepping jazz's beginnings, weight is sometimes placed on identifying the period when the music moved from an embryonic concept in the developmental phase of construction to a constitutently definable art form. In this respect and in principle, many musicologists and jazz historians, including Karl Koenig find the syncopated precursors to jazz appearing towards the close of the nineteenth century in

⁸³³ Vic Hobson, *Creating Jazz Counterpoint: New Orleans, Barbershop Harmony, and the Blues* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 110.

⁸³⁴ Boston Public Library Online - eBook. Call # eBook hoopla. Joplin, Scott., *Maple Leaf Rag – Sheet Music*. Sedalia: John Stark & Son, 1899.

⁸³⁵ Frankie Dusen in Donald M. Marquis, *In Search of Buddy Bolden: First Man of Jazz* (Louisiana: LSU Press, 2005), 102.

⁸³⁶ Ted Giola, *The History of Jazz, Second Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

numerous places.⁸³⁷ For example, it has been argued by James N. Gregory and others that Scott Joplin transported Ragtime up the Mississippi river in the late 1890s, performing the music in St. Louis and Sedalia, Missouri, and then Chicago.⁸³⁸ From there, sometime after the turn of the century the syncopated beat commonplace in ragtime found its way into countless Tin Pan Alley compositions and vaudeville shows, raising the tempo of American popular music to something more akin to the appropriated *moderato* and *allegro* cadences used in early jazz forms.⁸³⁹

To what extent Joplin influenced the purported sounds that emanated from Lincoln Park in New Orleans circa 1900, or the piano play of a rambling Jelly Roll Morton heard in Alabama, Texas, California, and up the Mississippi Delta during 1902, one can only speculate.⁸⁴⁰ But while it is not possible to identify exactly when, where and by whom the blue touch paper was lit, an elementally stable form of jazz music was almost certainly present in New Orleans and perhaps across several parts of the American south circa 1901.⁸⁴¹ The consensus amongst jazz and cultural historians, including Cary D. Wintz and Paul Finkelman, is that a similar form of the music, principally consisting of early New Orleans' bands tunes and piano pieces, did not reach the East Coast and cities such as New York and Boston until a decade later.⁸⁴²

Any suggestion to the contrary, such as Stu Vandermark's contention that 'jazz or some form of proto-jazz existed in Boston (and elsewhere) at approximately 1900 and that it was distinct (something like the differences among Territory Bands a couple of decades later)

⁸³⁷ 'Having spent many decades researching early jazz, Dr. Karl Koenig is recognized as a leading authority on early New Orleans jazz history.' Boston Public Library. The Arts. Nonfiction - in Library Use Only. Call # BROWN ML3507 .J383 2002. Karl Koenig, *Jazz in Print (1856-1929) An Anthology of Selected Early Readings in Jazz History* (New York: Pendragon Press, 2002).

⁸³⁸ James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 136.

⁸³⁹ James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁸⁴⁰ College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Edward L. Ayers Dean, and Hugh P. Kelley, *The Promise of the New South : Life After Reconstruction: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 383.

⁸⁴¹ Michael Saffle, *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950* (London: Routledge, 2012).

⁸⁴² Harvard University Library. Loeb Music Holdings: 1958-1961. Call # MUS 10. 12 V.1 - V.2. No Author Attributed, 'Blues and New York Jazz'. *Jazz Review*, Volumes 1-2, 1958. 11-14.

from New Orleans jazz' is sadly tenuous.⁸⁴³ While turn of the century musical handbooks and directories, including those collated by the Boston Musical Bureau, list a number of active and on occasion professional cornetists, trumpeters, and double bassists and so on - instruments now synonymous with formative jazz - these players are always listed as players in chamber concertos, orchestral societies,⁸⁴⁴ or vaguely characterised as 'performers in small musical associations'.⁸⁴⁵ The 1904 city musical directory lists eight centrally located saxophonists, all of whom were cited as members of unlisted military bands and orchestras.⁸⁴⁶

In reality, it is not surprising that such sources and many alike offer little evidence that jazz was under construction in Boston, New York, and other cities along the East Coast in the first decade of the twentieth century. In its seminal days, North American jazz was a music lacking legitimacy, with few players considered accomplished enough to be deemed professional let alone worthy of inclusion in a musical directory. It was a music first and foremost fashioned in the unregulated arenas of social evils, including many brothels and gambling dens.⁸⁴⁷ Meg Greene asserts, for example, that in dozens of unfettered and unpoliced houses of ill repute in Storyville, the red-light district of New Orleans from 1897 to 1917, an array of musicians evolved Ragtime forms into jazz forms while simultaneously over two-thousand registered prostitutes plied their trade.⁸⁴⁸ Naturally, when the music arrived on the East Coast, it settled, once again, in houses of assignation and ill repute, which posed a particular problem for Boston's cultural, puritan-inspired, patrons, the Brahmins.

On a national level, employment records indicate that the only place in America where black musicians were registered as professionals at the turn of the century was Chicago. Amy

⁸⁴³ Vandermark, Stu., stutoyu@hotmail.com, Boston Jazz, 1900-1929. Personal email communication. September 28, 2014.

⁸⁴⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - The Arts. Nonfiction. Call # MUSIC 4049a.178. Boston Musical Bureau, *Handbook of Musical Statistics, 1902*. (Boston: Boston Musical Bureau, 1902), 77-79.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid., 76-81.

⁸⁴⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - The Arts. Nonfiction. Call # 4049a.53. Boston Musical Protective Union, *Musicians Directory and Diary of Boston and Vicinity. Fifteenth Edition*. (Boston: John M. Schell Publisher and Printer, 1904), 57.

⁸⁴⁷ Ken Vail, *Jazz milestones: a pictorial chronicle of jazz 1900-1990, Volume 1993, Part 2* (Texas: Castle Communications, 1993), 6.

⁸⁴⁸ Meg Greene, *Billie Holiday: A Biography* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 5.

Absher⁸⁴⁹ and Thomas J. Hennessey⁸⁵⁰ state that in 1900, two-hundred-and-forty-six black Chicagoans (including forty-nine females) listed their occupations as musicians. In 1901, members of the Eighth Illinois band led by Alex Arment, a Creole, organised the all-black Local 208 of the American Federation of Musicians in response to ‘implacable opposition from white musicians’ to the admission of blacks to Chicago’s AFM Local 10.⁸⁵¹ Through the process of enforcing standards for membership, the setting of pay scales, and the monitoring of working conditions, Local 208 legitimatised black musicianship in Chicago. This action set a precedent that was later adopted by locals across America.⁸⁵²

While the first Ragtime recording, ‘Creole Belles’ written by J. Bodewalt Lempe, appeared circa 1900,⁸⁵³ and recordings of Cakewalks and Banjo Jigs even earlier, the first jazz record, a composition by the all-white ‘Original Dixieland Jass⁸⁵⁴ Band’,⁸⁵⁵ did not appear until 1917.⁸⁵⁶ When this is considered in the broader context of elementally stable jazz being present in America by 1901, sixteen years elapse before any music is committed to record.⁸⁵⁷ This not only reaffirms the notion of a music produced outside the framework of mass culture – unrecorded, rarely committed to print, and ushered, out of earshot, into houses of assignation – it also lends some credence to the idea that jazz and its inherent identity was perpetuated by

⁸⁴⁹ Amy Absher, ‘The Black Musician and the White City: Race and Music in Chicago, 1900–1967’, *The American Historical Review*, December 2015. 1917–1918. Available: <http://ahr.oxfordjournals.org/content/120/5/1917.full.pdf+html>. Accessed: June 18, 2015.

⁸⁵⁰ Thomas J. Hennessey, *From Jazz to Swing: African-American Jazz Musicians and Their Music, 1890–1935* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 21–24.

⁸⁵¹ George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 22.

⁸⁵² Ingrid Moson, *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call out to Jazz and Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 52–55.

⁸⁵³ Columbia Orchestra, *Creole Belles*. Columbia 330 & Columbia 31688. 1901. Shellac in Steve Sullivan, *Encyclopedia of Great Popular Song Recordings, Volume 2* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 811.

⁸⁵⁴ Jass before Jazz. The initial spelling of Jazz was Jass. But mischievous people were making a habit of scratching out the ‘J’s on posters advertising the The Original Dixieland Jass Band’, which then, unfortunately, advertised ‘ass bands’. No Author Attributed, ‘Original Dixieland Jass Band’, *Record Research*. Issues 48–74. Published 1963. 39.

⁸⁵⁵ The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, who billed themselves ‘The Creators of Jazz’, have long been dismissed as the White guys who copied African-American music, and called it their own. Colin Larkin, *The Virgin Encyclopedia of Jazz* (London: Virgin 2004), 667.

⁸⁵⁶ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music; Harvard Depository. Call # LP 12571. Original Dixieland Jass Band, *Dixie Jass Band One Step / Livery Stable Blues*. Victor – 18255. 1917. Shellac, 10", 78 RPM.

⁸⁵⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - The Arts. Nonfiction; Call # MUSIC ML113 .B3 1997. Elizabeth A. Davis, *Music Library Association, A Basic Music Library: Essential Scores and Sound Recordings* (Chicago and London: American Library Association, 1997), 330–33.

the musicians and groups from which it originated.⁸⁵⁸ During those sixteen years, one can only speculate as to how many musicians in however many cities, from Kansas to Boston and beyond, passed without leaving anything tangible behind. That said, one might also conclude that the legacy of such musicians lies in the way that they acted as a vessel for the developing jazz idiom from circa 1900 onwards, influencing a new generation of developing musicians (Jazz Age musicians) along the way.

One such musician was black, Boston-born multi instrumentalist and musical director, Tom Whaley. Born in 1892, Whaley appears, like so many Boston players, as an abbreviated footnote in the successful career of a national jazz icon. In this instance, that icon was Duke Ellington.⁸⁵⁹ From 1941 to 1968, Whaley operated as chief copyist for the many invocations of Ellington's touring band, scoring arrangements for rehearsals and impromptu jam sessions⁸⁶⁰ and later assisting with choral conducting.⁸⁶¹ Whaley's career, however, began some thirty years before his association with Ellington. During the year 1912, as he worked as a sit-in jazz musician in several bands, none of which achieved great notoriety, in Boston's South End.⁸⁶² Nonetheless, Whaley's testimonial recollections of his experiences at this time, along with those of early jazz pioneer and drummer, George Latimer (born 1891), from the same time are to date the earliest evidence of jazz music in Boston.⁸⁶³

Of particular note in the accounts of Whaley are references to the inroads made by a small collective of like-minded, entrepreneurial and indomitable black Bostonians, all of whom mostly emanated from the South End of the city. One such Bostonian was a relatively unknown saxophone player named Bill Smith. Aided by band-booker and bandleader, Harry

⁸⁵⁸ Brian Rust, *Song Title Index. Volume Iii Of Jazz And Ragtime Records 1897-1942* (Denver: Mainspring, 2004).

⁸⁵⁹ Mark Tucker, Duke Ellington, *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 374.

⁸⁶⁰ Anne Kuebler, 'Tom Whaley - Footnotes and Whole Notes in Jazz History'. *Duke Ellington Society*, Chapter 90, Newsletter Volume IV, Number 9. December 1996. Page. 2. Available online: <http://www.depanorama.net/desociety/199612.pdf>. Accessed: October 13, 2015.

⁸⁶¹ Duke Ellington, *A Concert Of Sacred Music From Grace Cathedral, 1965 Live*. Status Records: B00000081S. 1997. CD.

⁸⁶² Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History: Archives Center. Call # 1988.3058 (NMAH Acc.) Thomas L. Whaley (composer), Tom Whaley Collection, ca. 1941-1979, Archives Center, National Museum of American History: Series 1: Music Materials, 1942-1968.

⁸⁶³ Vandermark, Stu., stutoyu@hotmail.com, Boston Jazz, 1900-1929. Personal email communication. September 28, 2014.

‘Bish’ Hicks, Smith formed a small but significant local musicians union for blacks in the city during the year of 1912.⁸⁶⁴ The foundational activities of this organisation, which were, it seems, principally to support black musicianship in the South End through union connection, were conducted out of a small music store located on Westfield Street in the neighbourhood of Roxbury.⁸⁶⁵ Some time before 1915, records indicate that the union relocated to Tremont Street, near Mass Avenue, occupying a venue known as Hicks’ Harmony Store. It was at this time that Harry Hicks took over sole management of the union.⁸⁶⁶

Supported by two associates, Vernon Eaton and Dave Laney, Hicks is said to have adopted and where necessary appropriated the model of practice utilised by the white Musicians’ Association in Boston, Local 9, which received charter status from the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) in 1897.⁸⁶⁷ This explains why the Harmony Store became a collective hangout and practice space for aspiring black musicians as well as a base for the administrative aspects of the union membership. In terms of the latter, Hicks provided a platform for sustenance (the Harmony Store doubled as a booking office for bands on the local college and dancehall circuit) and on occasion, much needed financial aid.⁸⁶⁸ According to George Latimer, the first significant jam sessions consisting of discernible jazz musicians in the city were held at the Harmony Store: ‘Every Sunday afternoon all the cats used to bring their instruments and we’d have a jam session, with the door wide open and the crowd in the street getting a load of it’.⁸⁶⁹

In 1915, the union took on the title of ‘Local 535’. Significantly, during the same year it received charter status from American Federation of Musicians.⁸⁷⁰ This naturally gave ‘Local

⁸⁶⁴ James P. Kraft, *Stage to studio: musicians and the sound revolution, 1890-1950* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 211.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁶ Vandermark, Stu., stutoyu@hotmail.com, Boston Jazz, 1900-1929. Personal email communication. September 28, 2014.

⁸⁶⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - The Arts. Reference. Call # MUSIC REF ML28 .B7B6763X. Boston Musicians' Association, *Member Handbook* (Massachusetts: Watertown, 1897), 2.

⁸⁶⁸ Boston Musicians Association, 'Info - Local 9-535 - American Federation of Musicians'. Available: www.afm.org/locals/info/number/9-535. Accessed: June 7, 2015.

⁸⁶⁹ Stu Vandermark, Boston Jazz Scene – George Latimer. Published: January 25, 2014. Available: <http://bostonjazzscene.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/musiciansthe-major-contributors.html>. Accessed: June 12, 2014.

⁸⁷⁰ Marian Anderson in Emmett George Price., *Encyclopedia of African American Music* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 16-19.

535' professional status, which in turn projected an air of purpose. Perhaps more important, however, was the fact that legitimacy was achieved at a time when blacks in Boston, including the city's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), had taken it upon themselves collectively to oppose the release of W.D. Griffith's film, 'Birth of a Nation': originally titled 'The Clansmen'.⁸⁷¹ Griffith's work not only reinforced notions of black and white difference, principally through the process of dehumanising blacks,⁸⁷² but it also helped to hasten the re-emergence of and the perceived need for a recharged and more determined Ku Klux Klan. 'Birth of a Nation' became, as W. Bryan Rommel Ruiz notes, 'a symbol of the triumph of white supremacy'.⁸⁷³

While there had been references to the Klan in American cinema before 'Birth of a Nation', those references had not piqued the interests of right-wing factions in such a fashion.⁸⁷⁴ In city after city, from Boston to Portland, Oregon, screenings of the film heightened racial tensions, and on many occasions incited racial violence.⁸⁷⁵ Wherever it was shown – from Boston to Philadelphia and on to Chicago - NAACP branches mobilised community support in an effort to picket theatres and where possible prevent screenings, while whites flocked in their hundreds to view it. On April 17, 1915 in Boston, one week after the film had premiered in the city, five hundred angry black protestors clashed with droves of white filmgoers and two-hundred-and-sixty police deployed to keep the peace outside the Tremont Theatre.⁸⁷⁶

The next day, Boston's Mayor, James M. Curley held a public meeting at Faneuil Hall to discuss the future of the film. An estimated 25,000 blacks, including prominent members

⁸⁷¹ Ira H. Gallen, *Seymour Stern, D.W. Griffith's 100th Anniversary: The Birth of a Nation* (British Columbia: FriesenPress, 2014), 415.

⁸⁷² 'In an era marked by gradual advances in Negro literacy and economic independence, Birth of a Nation vilified black people, portraying them as little more than vicious animals who posed a tangible threat to white civilisation.' Elizabeth McHenry, *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African American Literary Societies* (Duke University Press, 2002), 178.

⁸⁷³ W. Bryan Rommel Ruiz, *American History Goes to the Movies: Hollywood and the American Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 151.

⁸⁷⁴ The US-based National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were lobbying the courts to ban the film on the grounds that it incited racial tensions.

⁸⁷⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microfilm. Call # E185.5 .C92. No Author Attributed, 'Opinions: Birth of a Nation', *The Crisis*. Volume 10. No. 2. June 1915. Page 70.

⁸⁷⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, "BIRTH OF NATION" CAUSES NEAR-RIOT. *Boston Daily Globe*. April 18, 1915. Page 1.

of the Boston branch of the NAACP, including Monroe Trotter, attended the meeting.⁸⁷⁷ Hearing their protests, and taking into consideration the views of the Boston Literary and Historical Association, who saw the film as the most destructive representation of blacks and their history ever created, Curley duly banned the film - but only for one day.⁸⁷⁸ Dissatisfied with this outcome, hordes of protestors moved to the Boston State House and demanded that Governor David Walsh ban the film indefinitely across the state of Massachusetts.⁸⁷⁹ Walsh drew up a censor bill to prohibit the film and all racially provocative films, but it did not pass a legislative vote.⁸⁸⁰

In the immediate aftermath of this failure, the Boston branch of the NAACP held no further protests of the feature, but did succeed in suppressing the film six years later in 1921.⁸⁸¹ While the eventual success of the Boston branch of the NAACP to ban the film did open the door for bans on the film in other cities, including New York, its failure in 1915, as Melvyn Stokes notes, served to emphasise divisions in the pro-black community of Boston.⁸⁸² Retrospective analysis of the initial campaign highlighted that while the overall aim of the Boston branch of the NAACP was to prohibit the spread of 'Birth of a Nation', the organisation had failed to work in alliance with similarly interested and determined groups, notably The National Equal Rights League (NERL), and had instead pursued its own, ultimately divisive and unsuccessful path.⁸⁸³

⁸⁷⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COLORED PEOPLE TO STORM STATE HOUSE' *Boston Daily Globe*. April 19, 1915. Page 1.

⁸⁷⁸ Elizabeth McHenry, *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African American Literary Societies* (Duke University Press, 2002), 178.

⁸⁷⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'COLORED PEOPLE TO STORM STATE HOUSE' *Boston Daily Globe*. April 19, 1915. Page 1.

⁸⁸⁰ Charles A. Gallagher, ed., Cameron D. Lippard, *Race and Racism in the United States: An Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic: An Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic* (ABC-CLIO, 2014), 126.

⁸⁸¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Microfilm. Call # E185.5 .C92. No Author Attributed, 'NAACP v. "The Birth of a Nation": The Story of a 50-year Fight. *The Crisis*. Volume 72. No. 2. February 1965. Page 96.

⁸⁸² London Melvyn Stokes., *D.W. Griffith's the Birth of a Nation : A History of the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time: A History of the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 238.

⁸⁸³ London Melvyn Stokes, *D.W. Griffith's the Birth of a Nation : A History of the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time: A History of the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 238.

During a time when more established and prominent black voices in Boston were being drowned out and thus failing to assist in achieving the conditions for universal black uplift, Harry ‘Bish’ Hicks and Local 535 developed somewhat under the radar. With sanctioned status accrued, the union was not only able to provide representation to blacks at a time when membership in any such cultural organisation in the city was almost unheard of, but it was also able to evolve and expand to accommodate a much more illustrious clientele. Building on solid foundations and based on committed leadership, Local 535 not only authenticated its standing as a professional organisation but it simultaneously established itself as a one of the most capable services for black jazz performers in Boston and soon thereafter all of America. From the start of the Jazz Age until a court-mandated merger with Local 9 (the city’s white union) in 1970, Local 535 operated as the top black musicians’ union in the country,⁸⁸⁴ catering for the needs of esteemed entertainers, including Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Earl Hines, and Jimmie Lunceford amongst many others.⁸⁸⁵

Furthermore, not only did Hicks mentor black musicians, pioneer Boston’s band booking business and instigate unionisation, he also inspired the emergence of new generation of pioneers, including many Jazz Age band bookers. Operating from offices in downtown Boston, black Bostonians, such as Walter Johnson, Clarence Cummings, and Skinny Johnson, established themselves as agents for the elites of the city. While their clientele was more discriminating, their status of respectability meant that on occasion accomplished black Boston musicians were granted opportunities to perform for the most esteemed factions of Boston society - and receive above average pay for doing so. By the mid-twenties, their bookings included some of the finest hotels in Boston, with the Ritz Carlton Roof a particular venue of note from 1927 onwards. As George Aaron Cuddy notes, arguably ‘no musician had a more significant impact on the development of jazz in the city’.⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - The Arts. Reference - In Library Use Only. Call # REF ML28. B7B6763X. MUSIC Boston Musicians' Association, *Member Handbook* (Massachusetts: Watertown, c. 1920).

⁸⁸⁵ George A Moonoogian, ‘Boston Bandstand: A Musical Odyssey’, *Whiskey, Women and...* No. 15, December 1985. Available: <http://nejazz.org/pdf/BostonBandstand.pdf>

⁸⁸⁶ George Aaron Cuddy, *Where Hash Rules: The Story of Charlie's Sandwich Shoppe - Eight Decades of an American Classic in Boston* (First Edition Design, 2012), eBook:

The accomplishments of Hicks and company proved a particularly telling point in Boston: notably that black Bostonians, away from NAACP and NERL divisions, did have the organisational capabilities and entrepreneurial nous to succeed independent of white influence. As a result, Local 535 emerged as an organisation with a clearly defined path, and as such, it was able to set the tone in Boston and to an extent across much of America for pioneering race-based jazz standards. In the grander scheme of early jazz history, those standards, without question, had a hand in many of the racially pioneering cultural events that occurred in Boston soon thereafter. For example, the city was the first place where a racially integrated group performed in public: Leo Reisman and the Hotel Brunswick orchestra appeared in 1928;⁸⁸⁷ while during 1935 in Boston, Duke Ellington became the first black musician to lead an orchestra.⁸⁸⁸

3. 1919 – ‘The King of Jazz is Dead’: opinion as fact - James Reece Europe, the darling of the Boston media

Of all the intriguing stories that have been told about the early years of jazz, few are as captivating as that of American ragtime and early jazz bandleader, arranger, and composer, James Reece Europe. Born on February 22, 1881 in Mobile, Alabama, to musical parents, Europe’s melodic development was one that began in childhood and thereon spanned the duration of his life, which remarkably included military service during the First World War.⁸⁸⁹ In 1891, Europe and family relocated from Mobile to Washington D.C, and it was there that he took up the violin, studying under the assistant director of the Marine Corps Band, Enrico Hurlei.⁸⁹⁰ At the age of 22, Europe, seeking a career in music, relocated to New York and undertook the task of playing piano in a cabaret. By 1907, he had signed on as musical director

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ahnBsroCy4oC&pg=PT1&lpg=PT1&dq=george+aaron+cuddy+boston+hash&source=bl&ots=wDLVCi79GZ&sig=d4JkQEtbNo-WC-SVQ5OTUXgWhqI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=oahUKEwjzuecy-TNAhUmCcAKHfECBjUQ6AEIHDAA#v=onepage&q=hicks&f=false>. Accessed: July 1, 2013.

⁸⁸⁷ Michael Sletcher, *New England* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 340.

⁸⁸⁸ Tom Reney, Duke Ellington’s Boston. New England Public Radio. Published: April 29, 2014. Available: <http://nepr.net/music/2014/04/29/duke-ellingtons-boston>. Accessed: June 01, 2014.

⁸⁸⁹ William C. Banfield, *Black Notes: Essays of a Musician Writing in a Post-album Age* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 124-127.

⁸⁹⁰ Frank Hoffman, ed., *Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 764.

for Cole & Johnson's 'Shoo-Fly Regiment',⁸⁹¹ a musical comedy for the stage equipped with a company of sixty black comedians, singers and dancers. Soon thereafter, he also directed the musical 'Mr. Lode of Coal' for Bert Williams, one of the pre-eminent (black) entertainers of the Vaudeville era.⁸⁹²

From these self-effacing and steady beginnings, Europe developed an aspirational approach to performance and music making that consistently set precedents for black players as well as devising a means of self-promotion and representation, at a time when blacks were unable to attain mainstream support. In New York during the year of 1910, for example, Europe, building on the work of Ernest Hogan, a musical innovator and the first black entertainer to produce and star in a Broadway musical show, fostered the creation of syncopated orchestras.⁸⁹³ Fusing the great three fashions of the time, orchestras, ragtime and blues with a repertoire of light classics, popular songs, spirituals, waltzes, and one-step tunes, Europe gave rise to a new form of black popular music. This music was rich in African-American lineage whilst also being somewhat derivative of the military marches that were commonplace in his history. What exists of this body of work has been considered the first instance of symphonic jazz.⁸⁹⁴

At this time, it was uncommon for black musicians in Broadway pit orchestras and dance bands to command a decent salary for their skills. Remarkably, Europe broke new ground when he established the Clef Club of New York, arguably one of the most unusual black organisations of the time.⁸⁹⁵ It was unusual because the Clef Club was part fraternal and part union, making it unlike any other organisation in the country at the time. Europe acted as lead

⁸⁹¹ The Shoo-Fly Regiment was a musical comedy written, staged and acted by 'those famous fun-makers, Cole and Johnson'. No Author Attributed, 'The Shoo-Fly Regiment'. *The Cornell Daily Sun*, Volume XXVIII, Number 43. Published: 12 November 1907. Page 7. Available online: <http://cdsun.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/cornell>. Accessed: July 2, 2015.

⁸⁹² L. A. Jackson, *Musicology 2101: A Quick Start Guide to Music Biz History* (California: MKM Publishing, 2010), 121.

⁸⁹³ Samuel A. Floyd, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 105.

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁵ David Gilbert. *The Product of Our Souls: Ragtime, Race, and the Birth of the Manhattan Musical Marketplace*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 163-190.

conductor for its symphony orchestra, and more significantly, he was elected as its first president.⁸⁹⁶



Figure 5.1: Clef Club with James Reese Europe, 1912. Courtesy Eubie Blake Collection, Maryland Historical Society

In a model that later inspired many jazz performers, including Thomas ‘Fats’ Waller, Willie ‘the Lion’ Smith, Eubie Blake, Luckey Roberts,⁸⁹⁸ and Boston’s Harry ‘Bish’ Hicks, its operations hub, a building on West 53rd Street, served both as a club and as an office for bookings.⁸⁹⁹ Noteworthy here is that when a musical act was booked through the Clef Club, they were hired as ‘entertainers’ and duly received a respectable salary, as well as transportation costs, room, and board.⁹⁰⁰

The model of business established by Europe proved exceptionally successful. At its height of popularity during the second half of the 1910s, a year of bookings generated over \$100,000, with subsidiary shows appearing in London and Paris.⁹⁰¹ Europe’s orchestra developed such a reputation that it was hired to appear at Carnegie Hall (a venue that catered to American cultural elitism) on May 2, 1912.⁹⁰² This was the first concert by a black ensemble

⁸⁹⁶ Frederick J. Spencer, *Jazz and Death: Medical Profiles of Jazz Greats* (Mississippi: university of Mississippi, 2002), 71.

⁸⁹⁷ No Author Attributed, ‘Welcome to Day One of Jazz at Carnegie Hall’. Published: May 2, 2012. Available: <http://www.carnegiehall.org/BlogPost.aspx?id=4294986122>. Accessed: July 21, 2014.

⁸⁹⁸ Jacqueline Edmondson, *Music in American Life: An Encyclopedia of the Songs, Styles, Stars, and Stories That Shaped Our Culture* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 544.

⁸⁹⁹ David Gilbert. *The Product of Our Souls: Ragtime, Race, and the Birth of the Manhattan Musical Marketplace*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 163-190.

⁹⁰⁰ Tuscaloosa Reid Badger., *A Life in Ragtime: A Biography of James Reese Europe: A Biography of James Reese Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 59.

⁹⁰¹ L. A. Jackson, *Musicology 2101: A Quick Start Guide to Music Biz History* (California: MKM Publishing, 2010), 128.

⁹⁰² Dave Gilbert, *James Reese Europe: The Emergence of the Black Professional Musician and the Creation of a Modern American Music* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin--Madison, 2003), 41.

at the esteemed venue, or any venue of this magnitude in fact, and they made a considerable impression. They were so well received that they returned in 1913 and 1914.⁹⁰³ While these performances can be considered the first instances in which black popular music invaded the concert auditorium, their significance went far beyond the realms of entertainment. The concerts were a political act of desegregation – the first defiant challenge to the early twentieth-century dominance of white American music, carried out at a time when blacks were largely without a platform for – political, social, and cultural – expression. As Europe remarked:

As composers, no matter what else you might think, we have created an orchestral language that is unique and distinctive and lends itself to the peculiar compositions of our race.⁹⁰⁴

Europe's ability to challenge the racial status quo and conquer new ground for black artistry in America continued when he was employed as bandleader by the most widely known and imitated exhibition ballroom team in the United States.⁹⁰⁵ Vernon and Irene Castle, residents of New York, met Europe at a private society party where the Clef Club Orchestra was playing.⁹⁰⁶ So impressed with his musicianship, they hired him and his associate, black composer and conductor, Ford T. Dabney, as their musical arrangers for all future dances.⁹⁰⁷ It was in this role that Europe played a significant part in the conception of one of the most important cultural creations of the time: the fox trot – without doubt, the most popular dance of the 1920s and 1930s.⁹⁰⁸ While Europe acknowledged that the musical impetus for his creation was down to 'a young Negro from Memphis, Tennessee', the great W.C. Handy

⁹⁰³ Dave Gilbert, *James Reese Europe: The Emergence of the Black Professional Musician and the Creation of a Modern American Music* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin--Madison, 2003), 41.

⁹⁰⁴ William C. Banfield, *Black Notes: Essays of a Musician Writing in a Post-album Age* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 126.

⁹⁰⁵ Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratynier, *Popular Music, 1900-1919: An Annotated Guide to American Popular Songs, Including Introductory Essay, Lyricists and Composers Index, Important Performances Index, Chronological Index, and List of Publishers* (Detroit: Gale Research International, Limited, 1988), 9.

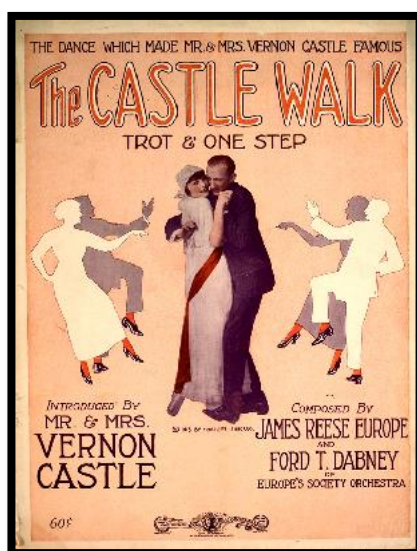
⁹⁰⁶ Edward Bert Wallace, *Theatre Symposium, Vol. 20: Gods and Groundlings: Historical Theatrical Audiences* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 99.

⁹⁰⁷ Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratynier, *Popular Music, 1900-1919: An Annotated Guide to American Popular Songs, Including Introductory Essay, Lyricists and Composers Index, Important Performances Index, Chronological Index, and List of Publishers* (Detroit: Gale Research International, Limited, 1988), xxviii.

⁹⁰⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'The Fox Trot', *The Boston Daily Globe*. Published: Nov 14, 1914. Page 16.

(adapted from his hot tune, 'Memphis Blues'), the Castles nonetheless credited their creation (and many more, including the Castle Walk and The Castle House Rag) to the rhythmical uniqueness of Europe's playing.⁹⁰⁹

More significantly, he signed with Joseph W. Stern & Company, one of the biggest publishers of sheet music.⁹¹⁰ In the spring of 1914, Stern issued fifteen compositions by Europe (many of them co-written with Ford T Dabney), including Vernon and Irene Castle's signature dances, such as *Castle Perfect Trot*, *The Castle Combination*, and *Castle Innovation Tango*.⁹¹¹ The collaborative success of the Castles, Dabney, and Europe had cross-pollinated ragtime with the cut-a-rug vanguard movements of contemporary dance and had brought new vigour to the ballroom.⁹¹²



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Figure 5.2: A poster promoting the 'Trot and One Step' composed by James Reece Europe and Ford T. Dabney

⁹⁰⁹ Julie Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn: A Century of Exhibition Ballroom Dance* (New York, New York University, 1995), 7.

⁹¹⁰ Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratynner, *Popular Music, 1900-1919: An Annotated Guide to American Popular Songs, Including Introductory Essay, Lyricists and Composers Index, Important Performances Index, Chronological Index, and List of Publishers* (Detroit: Gale Research International, Limited, 1988), 52.

⁹¹¹ Henry Louis Gates, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Harlem Renaissance Lives from the African American National Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 141.

⁹¹² Moreover, in addition to composing many great, and much loved, songs, including the 'Charleston' which became a national dance fad, Europe also initiated many innovative and stylised musical progressions: notably the pioneering of a stride style of jazz piano.

⁹¹³ The Parlor Songs Academy: Lessons in America's Popular Music - James Reece Europe 'The Jazz Lieutenant'. Published: February 2012. Available: parlorsongs.com/bios/jeuropa/jreuropa.php. Accessed: July 21, 2014.

The ongoing success of this collaboration served to catapult all parties to the pinnacle of the entertainment world. International success in performance, vast sheet music sales, and a flurry of Viktor record releases in New York, Paris, and London, not only broke boundaries, but also presented the first instance of a widely palatable black music that also appealed to factions of the American middle class, who had previously strongly opposed many forms of black cultural expression.⁹¹⁴ A 1913 *New York Herald* editorial remarked:

Can it be said that America is falling prey to the collective soul of the Negro, through the influence of what is popularly known as Ragtime music? If there is any tendency to such a national disaster, it should be definitely pointed out and extreme measures taken to inhibit the influence and avert the increasing danger. Ragtime music is symbolic of the primitive morality and perceptible moral limitations of the Negro type.⁹¹⁵

Europe's national and commercial success was soon thereafter halted by World War I: in the year of 1917, he enlisted as a private in the army. It did not take long for his commander, Colonel William Hayward to learn of his musical abilities, however, and he was duly asked to form a military band as part of the combat unit.⁹¹⁶ That band was the 369th Infantry Regiment Band. In the formation period, Europe felt - despite his own actions - that few musicians would be willing to leave high-paying jobs in cosmopolitan centres, such as New York. He was instructed, as such, by Hayward to bring in musicians from wherever he could, and he did. He went as far as Puerto Rico to recruit eighteen woodwind musicians of African or mixed ancestry, including Rafael Hernandez, 'composer of some of the most beloved popular ballads and dance tunes in Puerto Rico and Latin America'.⁹¹⁷ When the unit arrived in France on New Year's Day 1918, it was the first all-black combat unit to set foot on French soil. Subsequently, the band entertained troops and citizens in twenty-two cities,⁹¹⁸ and were always received with

⁹¹⁴ Henry Louis Gates, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Harlem Renaissance Lives from the African American National Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 141.

⁹¹⁵ Wendy Buonaventura, *I Put a Spell on You: Dancing Women from Salome to Madonna* (London: Saqi, 2003), 180.

⁹¹⁶ Floyd Levin, *Classic Jazz: A Personal View of the Music and the Musicians* (California: University of California Press, 2000), 67.

⁹¹⁷ Walter L. Hawkins, *Black American Military Leaders: A Biographical Dictionary* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2007), 151.

⁹¹⁸ Michael J. Budds, *Jazz and the Germans* (New York: Pendrago Press, 2002), 76.

great enthusiasm.⁹¹⁹ Noble Sissle remarked at the time that Europe had hit France with the ‘jazz germ’, and it spread everywhere he went.⁹²⁰

Triumphant in war, Europe and his band returned to New York on February 12, 1919. Feeding off their success in France and having accrued significant interest from the United States’ media as a result, Europe and his band, seeking to cash in on their popularity, immediately hit the road to tour some of the major cities in their homeland. In keeping with the opinions of the general public, the national media view on Europe was almost entirely positive - even in Boston. In the past, the Boston press had gone to great lengths to dissect ragtime, vaudeville, and the earliest invocations of the jazz idiom, often presenting unconstructive and ill-mannered perspectives. For example, the *Boston Daily Globe*, unable to write consistently about the aforementioned forms on a local level broadened its reportage to stories gleaned from England, France, Russia, and Italy. These stories included condemnations from respected national and international academics, classical musicians, and on one occasion, an unnamed English priest.⁹²¹

However, the Boston media, and in particular the *Boston Globe*, welcomed Europe and the 369th Infantry, with a stream of reports rich in glowing terms and upbeat phrases about the man himself and, even more surprising, his music. Headlines such as ‘Jim Europe’s Band Jazzes Deliriously’⁹²² and ‘Jim Europe and his Negro high priests of Jazz’,⁹²³ suggest that jazz was not just welcomed in Boston, but wanted too. This is reinforced by the fact that Europe and his musical entourage were booked to play several dates in the city as part of a nationwide

⁹¹⁹ Floyd Levin, *Classic Jazz: A Personal View of the Music and the Musicians* (California: University of California Press, 2000), 67.

⁹²⁰ ‘The jazz germ hit them and it seemed to find the vital spot, loosening all muscles and causing what is known in America as an ‘Eagle Rocking Fit’. Jeffrey H. Jackson, *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2003), 18.

⁹²¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Ragtime is Barred’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 11, 1915. Page 5.

⁹²² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Jim Europe’s Band Jazzes Deliriously’, *Boston Daily Globe*. March 29, 1919. Page 2.

⁹²³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, Famous Jazz Band Returns Tomorrow, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: May 8, 1919. Page 18.

tour. Lasting just shy of three months, the band appeared at the Parker Hill Hospital,⁹²⁴ Dorchester High School,⁹²⁵ the Boston Navy Yard,⁹²⁶ the Strand Theatre,⁹²⁷ Keith's Theatre,⁹²⁸ the Colonial Theatre,⁹²⁹ and several times at the Boston Opera House.⁹³⁰ Europe had become, without question, the darling of the Boston media and a revelation on the city's touring circuit.

During a time when blacks in Boston could feel fortunate to be seated in even the cheapest balcony seats of any esteemed concert venue, Europe repeatedly found himself centre stage of many white run, principally white frequented venues of esteem in the city.⁹³¹ Europe's universal appeal can principally be attributed to his unique ability to amalgamate black and white cultural tastes into one palatable form for both. In the writings and pronouncements of his compositions, he shrewdly utilised the great traditions and customs of his own people, as well as those of his white contemporaries and their influences. Working back and forth to fuse black vernaculars with Classical, Western European Romantic, and avant-garde traditions, Europe developed a competent and unique musical approach to performance. This approach included the performance of niche ragtime appropriations of music written by composers such as Bach and Brahms.

In doing so, Europe had found a unique way to bridge the gap between Anglo-American high-art and black modes of expression, while simultaneously conjuring an inimitable take on a developing contemporary black American music (jazz). This dynamic ultimately served, albeit temporarily, to make jazz music somewhat pleasurable for traditional concertgoers in

⁹²⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Navy Jazz Band Plays at Parker Hill Hospital'. *Boston Daily Globe*. March 6, 1919. Page 10.

⁹²⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Reception to Men from St Marks: Navy Jazz Band Secured for Meeting April 25', *Boston Daily Globe*. March 23, 1919. Page 46.

⁹²⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Concert Tonight by the U.S. Jazz Band', *Boston Daily Globe*. March 9, 1919. Page 32.

⁹²⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Valentine Party for Jazz Band Members', *Boston Daily Globe*. February 15, 1919. Page 8.

⁹²⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Navy Jazz Band Features at Keith's', *Boston Daily Globe*. June 17, 1919. Page 16.

⁹²⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Boston to have an opportunity to hear the famous United States Navy Jazz Band at its best', *Boston Daily Globe*. February 23, 1919. Page 34.

⁹³⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Famous Army Jazz Band at Boston Opera House', *Boston Daily Globe*. March 27, 1919. Page 9.

⁹³¹ Edward Bert Wallace, *Theatre Symposium, Vol. 20: Gods and Groundlings: Historical Theatrical Audiences* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 104.

Boston. From his position of good standing, Europe, rather than appealing above all to white Boston, instead actively used his status forcefully to project the word jazz into the conscious psyche of middle-class America, and in doing so compelled it to acknowledge its validity. This group was consistently referred to as the 'Navy Jazz Band', he willingly accepted the title of 'the jazz king', and often emblazoned the word on banners raised aloft on the stages upon which he performed. On March 29, the *Boston Daily Globe* wrote a figurative piece on his music drenched in commendation:

Lieutenant 'Jim' Europe's 369th U.S. Infantry Band, which played the 'Hell Fighters' to the battle fronts in France, last night wrote "JAZZ" in capital letters all over the stage of the Boston Opera House. Emblazoned it on the walls, and with it chased long lingering silence out of the corners and filled them with echoes of brass band bombardment.⁹³²

It seemed fitting, following his great success in Boston that his scheduled 1919 national tour would conclude on May 9, at the city's Mechanic's Hall.⁹³³ News of the show was relayed by the *Boston Globe* to 'hundreds of devotees of 'jazz' who had tried to buy, beg, or wheedle their way' into a sold out show at the Boston Opera House a number of weeks earlier.⁹³⁴ Once again, as was commonplace by now, the reports of Europe's imminent presence in Boston oozed with praise; *Globe* reports referred to the upcoming performance as, amongst many superlatives 'a festival, a carnival, a machinegun orgy of 'jazz' delivered by 'Jim and his spine-gingling, feet-wiggling outfit of ebony artists'.⁹³⁵ However, on the evening of May 9, Herbert Wright, one of the so-called 'percussion twins' in Europe's touring band purportedly took offence to the strict direction of the celebrated bandleader and violently attacked him in his dressing room during a scheduled intermission with a knife.⁹³⁶ Noble Sissle, who was backstage at the time, recalled:

⁹³² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Jim Europe's Band Jazzes Deliriously: Explains Why 369th Inf Called Hellfighters', *Boston Daily Globe*. March 29, 1919. Page 2.

⁹³³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Famous Jazz Band Returns Tomorrow: Europe's "Hell Fighters" at Mechanic's Building'. *Boston Daily Globe*. March 27, 1919. Page 9.

⁹³⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Famous Jazz Band Returns Tomorrow', *The Boston Daily Globe*. May 8, 1919. Page 18.

⁹³⁵ Ibid.

⁹³⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Wright Pleads not Guilty of Killing Lieut Europe'. *Boston Daily Globe*. May 15, 1919. Page 4.

Jim wrestled Herbert to the ground. I shook Herbert and he seemed like a crazed child, trembling with excitement. Although Jim's wound seemed superficial, they couldn't stop the bleeding, and as he was being rushed to the hospital, he said to me: 'Sissle, don't forget to have the band down at the State House at nine in the morning. I am going to the hospital and I will have my wound dressed....I leave everything for you to carry on.'⁹³⁷

Europe's jugular vein had been severed. The next day the papers carried the headlines: 'The Jazz King Is Dead'.⁹³⁸

In the context of black figureheads and spokespersons of the time, James Reece Europe can be considered one of the most significant. Jazz pianist, Eubie Blake remarked years after Europe's death that, 'People don't realise yet today what we lost when we lost Jim Europe. He was the saviour of Negro musicians... in a class with Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King Jr'.⁹³⁹ These lofty claims were echoed by Europe's biographer, Reid Badger, who noted in his book *A Life in Ragtime: A Biography of James Reece Europe*⁹⁴⁰ that the then 'King of Jazz' received the first public funeral for a black man in New York City (May 13, 1919).⁹⁴¹ Thousands of fans, black and white, turned out to pay their respects, clearly symbolising the impact that Europe had in using music as a means of transcending the clearly defined racial boundaries of the time, which had been reified by the Red Scare and subsequent re-emergence of the Ku Klux Klan.

While cities such as New York and Chicago could count on flurries of emerging jazz performers who were readily equipped to step up and fill the void left by Europe, in Boston his death, in a bizarre twist of fate, marked the end of jazz's brief venture into the city's

⁹³⁷ Robert Kimball, William Bolcom, *Reminiscing with Sissle and Blake* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 72.

⁹³⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, J. R. EUROPE, BAND LEADER, MURDERED. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: May 10, 1919. Page 1.

⁹³⁹ Tuscaloosa Reid Badger., *A Life in Ragtime : A Biography of James Reese Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁴¹ No Author Attributed, 'Jim Europe Wears Jazz Garb in Death: In silk Pleated Shirt, Striped Vest, and Fabtastic Suit he Goes to Rest', *The New York Sun*. May 14, 1919. Page 18. Available online: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030431/1919-05-14/ed-1/seq-18/#date1=05%2F09%2F1919&sort=date&date2=05%2F23%2F1919&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&index=11&words=EUROPE+Europe+JIM+Jim&proxdistance=5&rows=50&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=jim+europe&andtext=&dateFilterType=range&page=1>. Accessed: July 12, 2015.

mainstream. Europe's unique abilities had transformed ragtime and early conceptions of jazz from a perceived corrupting influence on Boston's young into an acceptable, and on many occasions celebrated, form of entertainment. However, by unfortunate association, Europe's death at Mechanic's Hall lingered long over Boston and its jazz scene. *The Daily Globe* referred to the murder as 'the most sensational killing in the history' of the city,⁹⁴² and almost overnight, the music was cast aside and thereon quickly ushered away once again towards the margins, where it remained for much of the nineteen-twenties.

In the immediate aftermath of Europe's death, Boston's once praiseworthy (white-led) media were suddenly awakened to the perceived barbarity and savage nature of black culture. A consequence of this was an almost wholesale swing to negative tones when discussing black jazz music and its players, which allied the views of the *Boston Globe* with journalistic tracts found in the *Pittsburgh Press*,⁹⁴³ and the *Southeast Missourian*,⁹⁴⁴ amongst many others. Such tracts unfoundedly tied jazz to shortcomings such as mental illness, matricide and sexual promiscuity. Again, drawing their material from across the globe, Boston's press similarly tied jazz's influence to acts of murder,⁹⁴⁵ cannibalism,⁹⁴⁶ burglary,⁹⁴⁷ and its negative effects on health,⁹⁴⁸ adding these factors to harmful links attributed to the music's New Orleans' heritage, including criminality and worse, the social evil: prostitution.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext., Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'J.R. Europe, Band Leader, Murdered', *Boston Daily Globe*. May 10, 1919. Page 1.

⁹⁴³ No Author Attributed, 'Fate of Dorothy Perkins Soon to be in Jury's Hands', *The Pittsburgh Press*. Published: June 16, 1925. P. 3.

⁹⁴⁴ United Press, 'Jazz Girl' is Found Insane: Dorothy Ellingson Not to be Tried for Murder of Mother', *The Southeast Missourian*. Published: April 9, 1925. P. 1.

⁹⁴⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext., Call # AN2.M4B64. Special Dispatch to the Globe, 'SEVEN YEARS FOR "JAZZ" GIRL: Possible Term in Murder of Her Mother Case Is Transferred to the Juvenile Court Father Says Insanity Not in Family'. *Boston Daily Globe*. January 21, 1925. Page 12.

⁹⁴⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext., Call # AN2.M4B64. Capt Jean B Le Meitour, 'Our French Captain Is Razzled by the Jazz Crazy Band Music Rules the Roost in Patee; and He Discovers Its 'Terrible Origin' - Pussyfoot and Jazz', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 28, 1919, 56.

⁹⁴⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext., Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'FOUR "MUSICIANS" CAPTURED BURGLARS' TOOLS IN CASES Arrested in Hotel at Revolver Point in Safe Robbery Plot--Two Others and Girl Held', *Boston Daily Globe*. April 29, 1922. Page 1.

⁹⁴⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext., Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Says That Jazz Corrupts Youth: Melrose Woman So Tells Taunton Club', *Boston Daily Globe*. Feb 2, 1922. Page: 20.

⁹⁴⁹ Gary Krist, *Empire of Sin: A Story of Sex, Jazz, Murder, and the Battle for Modern New Orleans* (New York City: Crown/Archetype, 2014).

Thus as the Jazz Age got underway, efforts to make the music respectable in Boston revolved more and more around the negative arguments put forward by vocal white factions, including those in the media who came to echo the views of the city's higher echelons, Brahmins, as well as white culturists and academics, including Boston University professor, H. Augustine Smith. The views of these people, conversely, also had a profound effect on the ways in which the city's black upper and middle classes (including the LWCS) came to view the music. Fearful of the damage that an association with a somewhat secular, uncontrolled, and largely stigmatised music might have on efforts to project an aura of black civility and professionalism, leading blacks in Boston, including the LWCS, all but rejected jazz. At the same time, the music was taking hold in Harlem. In Boston, this shift ultimately created a schism in the cultural sphere between the black upper and middle classes and the working classes.

4. Liquor Light: Banned in Boston – The Watch and Ward, the Social Evil, and 'the End of Nightlife'

Social historian, Alexander W. Williams stated that 'the most dreadful curse that any people ever voted upon themselves, wilfully, stubbornly, and with open eyes, was surely that of prohibition'⁹⁵⁰: an amendment to the U.S. Constitution ratified in 1918 that forbade the 'manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcoholic beverages for consumption (repealed in 1933).⁹⁵¹ While life in a dry country posed particular problems for its citizens, they nonetheless found ways to skirt the law, with some bootleggers profiting handsomely from the illegal running and sale of alcohol. One such individual was Charles 'King' Solomon, a Jewish-Russian mob boss with an interest in several clubs in Boston.⁹⁵² Aided by Joseph Linsey, with partners Hyman Abrams and Louis Fox, Solomon established himself as the leading figure in

⁹⁵⁰ Alexander W. Williams, *A social History of the Greater Boston Clubs* (Boston: Barre Publishers, 1970), 114-115.

⁹⁵¹ Harvard University Library. Law School: Harvard Depository. Call # K13. A78x. American Bar Association, 'Legal Aspects of the Prohibition Amendment : the argument of Eliot Tuckerman, Esq., in the New York Assembly, that the Prohibition Amendment was not legally and constitutionally before the states for action; Extracts from the Journal of the Federal Convention of 1787 and Madison's Notes. Congressional precedents. *Massachusetts Law Quarterly*. May, 1918. p. 233-281

⁹⁵² Emily Sweeney, *Boston Organised Crime* (Boston: Arcadia Publishing, 2012).

New England rum-running, monopolising much of the illegal enterprise, paying off and bribing law officials as and when was necessary.⁹⁵³ As such, buying alcoholic drinks on the black market for home consumption was relatively easy on the East Coast, if you knew where to go.

However, if the private citizen was able to get along, in a fashion, the majority of Boston bars and clubs did not fare so well in their precarious position vis-a-vis the law. Rather, what occurred in Boston was the development of an underground network of speakeasies – illicit drinking clubs – that were ‘more grungy than glamorous’ but ultimately loaded with alcohol. Circa 1920, there were an estimated 4000 of these types of social venues in the city – interestingly, more than anywhere else in the United States.⁹⁵⁴ Naturally, prohibition and the existence of an underground network of speakeasies had a detrimental effect on the legitimate and dry club sector, which in contrast boasted around, only, 1000 venues. Amongst these venues were, of course, high-end run and respectable establishments, including The Latin Quarter, The Coconut Grove, and Fox and Hounds, that were struggling because of the sheer volume of illegal nightlife in the city.⁹⁵⁵

Wrapped up in this period of proscription was the additional anti-alcohol push of Boston’s temperance factions. Amongst them were the city’s Watch and Ward Society, a powerful band of Brahmin moral crusaders, who presided over and outlawed all things obscene by suppressing anything, from indecency in books, pictures, and performances, as well as gambling, prostitution and drug use – in short, anything deemed insalubrious by their standards.⁹⁵⁶ The Watch and Ward Society continued in the same superior vein as Boston Puritans, and any other figures of temperance before them.⁹⁵⁷ The society spent some 80

⁹⁵³ Edward Anth Gibbons, *Boston Virtuous Vice* (New York: iUniverse, 2007), 53.

⁹⁵⁴ U.S. Government, *The Prohibition Amendment: Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Seventy-first Congress, Second Session on H.J. Res. 11, 38, 99, 114, 219, and 246, February 12 to April 24, 1930* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1930), 13-14.

⁹⁵⁵ Stephanie Schorow, *Drinking Boston: A History of the city and its spirits* (Boston: Union Park Press, 2012), 133-134.

⁹⁵⁶ E. Digny Baltzell, *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia* (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 1996), 48.

⁹⁵⁷ Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward’s Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012).

years, from 1878, outlawing 'immoral' books, leading raids on burlesque houses and gambling establishments and making the words 'Banned in Boston' a national catchphrase.⁹⁵⁸

A roll call of the Watch and Ward reads like a roll call of Brahmin aristocracy, including such familiar names as Coolidge, Lodge, Lowell, Peabody, Saltonstall and Weld.⁹⁵⁹ Moreover, these individuals inspired a wealth of likeminded organisations. From The Boston Young Men's Temperance Society, whom through motives of 'self-respect, self-preservation, patriotism and a duty to Christianity' sought to maintain moral purity, to Cora Frances Stoddard of the Scientific Temperance Movement, who at the turn of the century and well into the Jazz Age sought to rationally show that alcohol was bad for society and generated much of its ills. In short, the city nurtured many evocations of Watch and Ward-inspired Puritanism that ultimately came to underpin the era of prohibition.⁹⁶⁰ As Neil Miller asserts:

The Watch and Ward's purview was wide...and nothing seemed too small or unimportant to engage the society's interest, ranging from paintings and photographs in shop windows to theatrical posters and especially anything that even faintly smacked of a raffle or lottery, from the lowliest church bazaar to the most obscure agriculture fair.⁹⁶¹

The Watch and Ward Society emerged at the same time that the Boston Brahmin stranglehold on the city's politics and social activities was beginning to wane.⁹⁶² This society boasted an array of powerful and influential figures in Boston's communities and it appealed on several levels to many of the city's residents, notably through its affluence, status, and links to local churches. From the Archbishop, Phillips Brooks to Bishop Lawrence and Endicott Peabody of Groton, the Watch and Ward's church factions sought to question the reading

⁹⁵⁸ Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward's Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012).

⁹⁵⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # 7576.85 1905-08. The New England Watch and Ward Society, *Annual report of the New England Watch and Ward Society for the Year 1914-195* (Boston: Office of the Society, 1915).

⁹⁶⁰ Boston Young Men's Temperance Society, *Address of the Young Men's Temperance Society to the young men of Boston: to which is annexed the constitution of the Society* (Boston: Garrison and Knapp, 1832).

⁹⁶¹ Neil Miller in Marjorie Howard, 'Neil Miller writes a history of the group that made the Hub famous for intolerance', *Tufts Journal*. September 16, 2010. Available online: <http://tuftsjournal.tufts.edu>. Accessed: June 23, 2015.

⁹⁶² Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward's Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012).

habits and social activities of Boston citizens.⁹⁶³ In a general respect, this society was elitist in makeup and exclusive in its ideas; its members 'spoke only to each other and to God'.⁹⁶⁴ Through such discussions, however, it developed an ultimately imperceptible yet strangely well-known demarcation line between acceptable and uncouth conduct.

While Boston had upheld many licence and prohibition ordinances since 1852, it was not until the mid-1880s that temperance found its way to the centre of political discussion. From this time up until 1920, efforts to maintain social order in Boston stretched to efforts to medicalise habitual drunkenness in the city.⁹⁶⁵ While statistics show that insofar as public fears about the consumption of alcohol in the city increased during the final two decades of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth, alcohol consumption remained moderately stable.⁹⁶⁶ Thus the attempt to medicalise heavy drinking in Boston can be seen to have amounted to a moral panic – 'brought on by a condition, episode, person, or group of persons that pose a threat to societal values and interests' – over alcohol and habitual drunkenness that underpinned much of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.⁹⁶⁷

Boston elites, principally Brahmins with close ties to temperance and the Watch and Ward, feared America's nourishment of burgeoning social behaviours and diversity and ultimately considered them beyond the pale. With alcohol's close ties to the saloon and regular street bar, by 1919 the perils of drunkenness had become inextricably linked to gambling, vice, and hostility, which were all tied by the mainstream Boston media to the perceived Irish menace. Ongoing sectarian tensions and anti-Catholic violence only exacerbated the fears of leading Brahmins, who felt that not only was their political grip on the city of Boston slipping,

⁹⁶³ E. Dignity Baltzell, *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia* (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 1996), 48.

⁹⁶⁴ Harvard University Library, Law School; Red Set. Call # Special Collections; Box 366 Folder 10 Student Papers. Wallace French Whitney, Jr., 'The New England watch and ward society: A study of a private censorship organization,' Typescript, submitted to the Harvard Law School. Third year essay paper; Published: April, 1967.

⁹⁶⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # 7576.85 1905-08. The New England Watch and Ward Society, *Annual report of the New England Watch and Ward Society for the Year 1914-1915* (Boston: Office of the Society, 1915).

⁹⁶⁶ Perry Duis, *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 34-38.

⁹⁶⁷ Paul S. Boyer, *Purity in Print: The Vice-society Movement and Book Censorship in America* (New York: Scribner, 1968), 187-188.

but the laws and regulations by which they had governed for so long were diminishing too. Thus private vices quickly became threats to the conservative quest for social control, the religious desire for conformity, the reformist search for social uplift, and of course public customs; under the strict control of the Watch and Ward Society, Boston — the formerly enlightened epicentre of the American Revolution—was reduced to a cultural backwater.

Not before long, a ban on alcohol in the city soon led to restrictions of licensing hours. For much of the Jazz Age, ‘Boston dance halls and restaurants were required to close by midnight, and public dances at hotels by 2 am’.⁹⁶⁸ Henry Harris of the *New York Times* remarked that there was literally no place in the city to go for those who wished to continue the party.⁹⁶⁹ However, this was not necessarily the case. Certain clubs did find ways to prolong their entertainments by establishing a membership card scheme, whereby all clientele in company after closing time were asked to purchase a loyalty card.⁹⁷⁰ These cards skirted the law, somewhat, by transforming several of Boston’s entertainment venues into borderline legitimate social clubs that promoted shared activities such as chess, cookery, and life drawing. But such status was often short-lived and these venues were consistently placed under investigation by the police and the city’s para-police force, the Watch and Ward.⁹⁷¹

While Boston’s various strands of Puritanism and stringent restrictions on gambling, burlesque and prostitution assisted in making the city the most straitlaced in America, these conditions were not conducive to the growth of a jazz scene. After all, jazz is a music that is well known to have been conceived in the bars, honky-tonks, and houses of prostitution that lined the streets of New Orleans’ red light district, Storyville.⁹⁷² Jazz greats, including Louis Armstrong, Earl ‘Fatha’ Hines, and ‘Jelly Roll’ Morton all got their starts playing in brothels.⁹⁷³

⁹⁶⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris, ‘Nightclub Life Over in Boston’, *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

⁹⁶⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris, ‘Nightclub Life Over in Boston’, *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁷¹ Alexander Whiteside Williams, *A social history of the greater Boston clubs* (Pennsylvania: Barre Publishers, 1970), 128-138.

⁹⁷² Bill C. Malone, David Stricklin, *Southern Music/American Music* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 53.

⁹⁷³ Melissa Hope Ditmore, *Prostitution and Sex Work* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 52.

In fact, many variants of black music were refined on the stages of houses of assignation, even well into the 1970s: for example, James Brown worked as an entertainer in a bordello in Georgia.⁹⁷⁴ In reality, places of vice with a particular penchant for prostitution, alcohol, gambling, and violence were the vibrant arenas of cultural openness where jazz was allowed to flourish – the very places that Boston Brahmins sought to stifle and where possible eliminate.

In 1919, West 131st street in Harlem emerged as a hotbed of illegal gambling, alcoholism, and more significantly sexual activity, with speakeasies showcasing ‘questionable women’ and brothels such as Peg Smith’s at number 40 offering escort services for \$5 (\$2 for the room per night).⁹⁷⁵ A 1927 study conducted by the Bureau of Social Hygiene, and carried out by Raymond Claymes, the committee’s first full-time black investigator, concluded that ‘prostitution was four to five times more prevalent’ in Harlem ‘as in other sections of the city’.⁹⁷⁶ Claymes remarked that he was approached by prostitutes, homosexual men, and white female visitors; a prostitute, allegedly, solicited him at Small's Nightclub for six dollars.⁹⁷⁷ Claymes’ report also noted that several notable entertainment venues that accommodated black jazz music were also present on the street. The mix of often-packed venues, including the Bandbox, Connie’s Inn, the Lafayette Theatre, and the Rhythm Club, alongside many houses of ill repute saw to it that Harlem had, either by chance or design, replicated the model that had helped jazz to flourish in New Orleans circa 1902.⁹⁷⁸

By 1919 in Boston, however, Watch and Ward pressure had resulted in the almost entire eradication of the traditional brothel. In fact, the society were so anti-sex that they even

⁹⁷⁴ Shirelle Phelps, *Contemporary Black Biography: Profiles from the International Black Community, Volume 15* (New York: Gale, 1997), 33.

⁹⁷⁵ Burton W. Perettitti, *Nightclub City: Politics and Amusement in Manhattan* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 36-37.

⁹⁷⁶ Harvard University Library. Widener. Call # Soc 574. 148. Stephen Robertson, 'Harlem Undercover Vice Investigators, Race, and Prostitution, 1910–1930'. *Journal of Urban History*. vol. 35 no. 4. May 2009. 486-504.

⁹⁷⁷ Burton W. Perettitti, *Nightclub City: Politics and Amusement in Manhattan* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 36-37.

⁹⁷⁸ Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 81-82.

went as far as to ban the mention of abortion, which was the main reason they did not want Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*⁹⁷⁹ (released in 1925) sold in Boston. In place of brothels emerged society 'cafés' – venues that projected an image of sophistication such as the Florence Hotel in the North End, but where beneath the veil of projected refinement, were places where women nonetheless furtively solicited men for sex.⁹⁸⁰ These 'cafés' emerged coincidentally in the wake of a 1915 regulation enacted by the Boston Licensing Commission that 'prohibited male patrons from entering a public room where liquor was sold and where women were allowed, unless the man was accompanied by the woman'.⁹⁸¹ In order to enforce this regulation, in 1916 the Watch and Ward president Frederick B. Allen, recognising that the society cafes were skirting the rules, called for partitions to be erected so as to separate men and women.⁹⁸² He remarked at the time:

There must not be places where men and women are openly and defiantly inducted to lead lives of shame.⁹⁸³

By 1918, after a conference of civil and military authorities, mass arrests were carried out in the city of Boston with a view to eradicating prostitution once and for all. On June 11, 1918 thirty-four women were arrested and taken into custody for being 'idle and disorderly', while on the next evening, a further sixty-one were arrested for being perceived 'street corner loafers'. Arrests continued again on June 13, with a further thirty-four women and 11 men this time, believed to have been men profiteering from the sexual activities of the women, arrested in thirty minutes. At this stage, the *Globe* reported that 'It is understood that several women of the underworld have fled to other cities and towns, where they will remain until the Boston Crusade dies out'.

⁹⁷⁹ Theodore Dreiser, *An American Tragedy* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1925).

⁹⁸⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Delivery Desk. Call # 7576.85 1905-08. The New England Watch and Ward Society, *Annual report of the New England Watch and Ward Society for the Year 1914-195* (Boston: Office of the Society, 1915).

⁹⁸¹ Harvard University Library. Widener: Harvard Depository. Call # State Documents - Illinois, 1917. City Council Committee on license, John Toman., *Report to the Mayor and Aldermen by the Committee on License, Chicago City Council, on the Public Licensing, Regulation and Control of the Liquor Traffic in Boston and New York City* (Chicago: Alcoholic Bevarage Industry, 1917).

⁹⁸² Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward's Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 68-69.

⁹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 68.

The Watch and Ward, however, continued to pursue an end to prostitution in Boston through the courts. On March 22, 1919, they successfully lobbied Boston magistrates to close Revere House, situated in Bowdoin Square at the north side of Beacon Hill – a place equipped with a downstairs cafe that was used for immoral bargaining, and rooms on the ‘third floor of the hotel’ used almost continuously for immoral purposes’.⁹⁸⁴ As prohibition took effect, the remaining elements of prostitution in the city were amalgamated with emerging speakeasies – an almost forced unity. As Jack Beatty asserts, Boston’s ‘Huntington Avenue quickly became ‘lined with speakeasies cum bordellos’. However, these establishments, ruled by the crooked laws of illicit activity, relied on the corruption of police officers who were willing to offer protection for money and where necessary to turn a blind eye to prostitution.

While some of the venues and speakeasies in Boston in 1919 shared similar characteristics to the more questionable venues of New York – notably a mix of alcohol, gambling, and prostitution – the overall dynamic of nightlife in the two cities was vastly different. Aside from the concentration of speakeasies cum bordellos on Huntington Avenue, Boston lacked a defined cultural epicentre where jazz music could flourish. Black jazz in New Orleans and New York prospered in the often unregulated and illicit climates of compacted geographic spaces, such as Harlem. Conversely, Boston’s jazz scene was principally spread over a multitude of areas, including the North End and South End, as well as venues in Greater Boston and further afield across the state of Massachusetts. Logically, this dynamic fragmented the overall scene itself and consequently assisted in diluting the black voice inherent in its black jazz of the time. Thus, the compacted Harlem scene of New York can be seen to have used its nightlife to cultivate an innovative and shared black voice. In Boston, however, restrictions on nightlife and a lack of solidity on licensing, ultimately served to thwart any such presence.

⁹⁸⁴ Neil Miller, *Banned in Boston: The Watch and Ward’s Crusade against Books, Burlesque, and the Social Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 71.

5. The Lambs' Club, the Phalanx, and the Pickwick: three case studies on Boston Nightlife at the mid-point of the Jazz Age.

Before Wally's Café (established 1940), located in the South End of Boston and formally titled America's oldest jazz club,⁹⁸⁵ the city was home to the Pickwick Club, located at No. 12 Bench Street. During the early years of the 1920s, it was a popular meeting place for young dancers and jazz fanatics. On July 4, 1925, however, it became better known as the place where forty-five people lost their lives and over fifty were injured as its core structure gave way to the weight of a large jazz crowd inside.⁹⁸⁶ Press reports describe the scene: as revellers danced without warning the fifth floor of the building collapsed, carrying with it the fourth and third floors. Within moments, tons of stone, plaster and bricks crashed through to the second floor where 150 merry makers were enjoying an evening's entertainment. Unsurprisingly, due to the added weight the second floor quickly gave way and carried down into the basement a cargo of dead and dying.⁹⁸⁷ Amongst the departed were famous boxer, Neddo Flanagan,⁹⁸⁸ and local Police Inspector, Alexander Benjamin.⁹⁸⁹

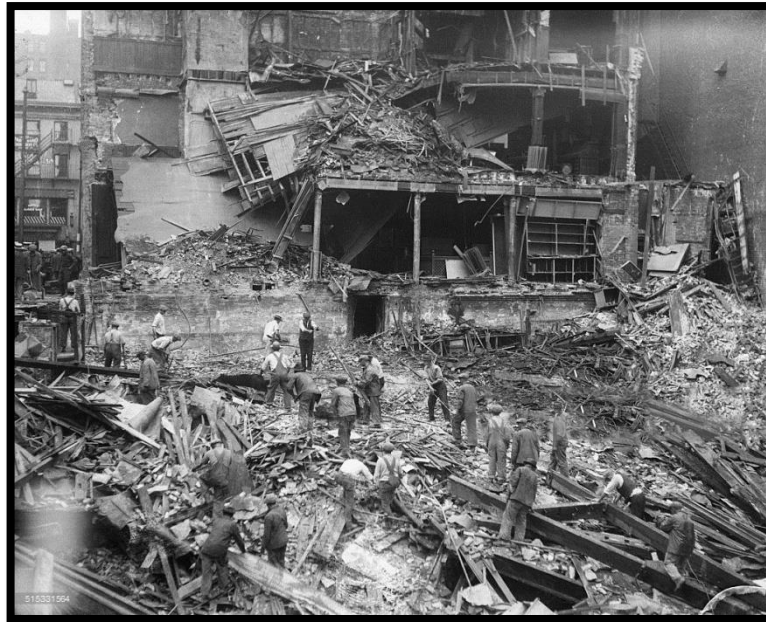
⁹⁸⁵ Boston Magazine Online, 'Best of Boston, 2013 Best Jazz Club: Wally's Café'. Available: <http://www.bostonmagazine.com/best-of-boston/2013/wallys-cafe-6/>. Accessed: July 12, 2013.

⁹⁸⁶ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Return Secret Indictments in Pickwick Club Disaster', *Reading Eagle*. Published: July 11, 1925. Page 1.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁸ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, '35 Victims Identified – Grand Jury Begins Investigation Today', *The Boston Daily Globe*. Published, July 6, 1925. Page 1.

⁹⁸⁹ No Author Attributed, 'Remove 41 Bodies from Boston from Boston Ruins', *The New York Times*. Published: July 5, 1925. Page 1.



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Figure 5.3: Workmen clearing away debris, July 4, at the site of the Pickwick collapse

Two days later, on Monday, July 6, District Attorney Thomas C. O'Brien, supported by Governor Fuller, Attorney General Jay R. Benton, Secretary of State F.W. Cook, and Commissioner of Public Safety, Alfred F. Foote, launched a grand jury (Suffolk County) investigation to look into the cause of the collapse. In addition, all nightclubs and resorts in the centre of the city, as well as some further afield were shut down, 'pending further inspection'. The next day, Henry Harris writing for the *New York Times* declared that 'Night Club Life' in Boston was all but over.⁹⁹¹ While evenings in the city would eventually return to some semblance of normalcy, the disaster only served to support the sentiments of Boston officials, the Watch and Ward Society, and members of the public who viewed the Pickwick and similar clubs in the city as arenas for vice, gambling, and general criminality. Worse still, the collapse was used by the Boston media and city elites as a means to attack jazz culture and associated new-age social conventions such as dancing.

⁹⁹⁰ 'Workmen Clearing away debris, July 4 at the site of the Pickwick collapse'. Published: July 6, 1925. Available: www.gettyimages.com.au/pictures/boston-massachusetts-42-revelers-die-in-building-crash-most-news-photo-515331564#boston-massachusetts-42-revelers-die-in-building-crash-most-of-boston-picture-id515331564

⁹⁹¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris, 'Nightclub Life Over in Boston', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

At the start of 1925, Boston nightlife principally revolved around three venues: the Pickwick, the Phalanx, and the Lambs' Club. Inside fifteen months, all three were gone, barring desperate attempts to reopen the latter two. While the city boasted an additional array of barrooms and ballrooms, the aforementioned were the 'big three' venues in the city.⁹⁹² While they all, to at varying degrees, catered for the dance craze culture of the Jazz Age, each club was quite different from the other in its makeup, rules, and clientele. Yet all operated on the same fundamental principle of membership, late night dancing, and a turn-a-blind-eye attitude to the sale of liquor on the premises by third parties. As Harris noted, 'It was possible that someone might be on the premises with a suitcase of liquor for sale. Yet it was impossible, if the club was raided, that the management knew anything of liquor-selling, even if the same man brought the same suitcase to the same club with the same kind of liquor every night for a month'.⁹⁹³

While all three clubs serviced the interests of 'respectable' clientele at times, the Lambs' Club on Lansdowne Street was principally billed as the 'aristocratic' venue; the atmosphere at the Pickwick and the Phalanx were perceived to be venues dominated by criminality. The Lambs' Club, situated on the second floor of 42 Lansdowne in a block of 'Garage buildings' had an air of esteem about it. It was described as a particularly 'hard place to enter'. Entrance was only granted if a person purchased membership at \$3 per head, while the food was described as 'expensive' and the entertainment – orchestral music, as well as cabaret and tap dancing - 'above average'.⁹⁹⁴ Its general clientele base was entirely white and largely male, consisting of theatre professionals, athletes,⁹⁹⁵ and university students from Harvard. As a rule, women were not granted entry unless they were escorted by a male. However, those that

⁹⁹² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris, 'Nightclub Life Over in Boston', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

⁹⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁴ Constance Valis Hill, *Tap Dancing America: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 151.

⁹⁹⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, 'Lambs Club, Inc, Gets City Licence: Protest of Police Captain Kneeland Disregarded', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page: A1.

did attend were described as 'prettier and more expensively dressed' than the women that frequented the Pickwick and the Phalanx.⁹⁹⁶

The membership cards handed out at the Lambs' Club originally carried the name of 'The Charles River Athletic Association'. It is believed the club's board, including president, Joseph L. McCarthy, Treasurer, Thomas Kind, and Secretary, John McGrath,⁹⁹⁷ bought up the charter of a relatively unknown and defunct organisation and operated under its name to navigate around the strict trading hours imposed on Boston clubs and barrooms. In this way, the Lambs' Club was able to operate until the hour of 3 am on a consistent basis.⁹⁹⁸ However, despite its air of sophistication, the Lambs' Club came into public notice on several occasions between 1923 and July 7, 1925, and as a consequence, the club also came under the disapproval of the Watch and Ward Society, which obtained wholesale indictments to prevent McCarthy, Kind, and McGrath et al from operating.⁹⁹⁹

For all of its ostensible sophistication, The Lambs' Club faced a particular problem in Boston, principally that its clientele, comprising of white, refined Americans were the closest group of entertainment seekers in the city in terms of social standing to members of the Watch and Ward Society. Thus, the behaviour of those who frequented the club and partook in recreational activities, both legal (dancing) and illegal (gambling, drinking) were closely scrutinised and liable to evoke negative responses. For the Watch and Ward viewed the actions of somewhat well regarded and perceptibly respectable white Bostonians as detrimental to their own position of high regard and eminence. Alcoholism, gambling, and vice were largely deemed commonplace in the poorer areas of the city and therefore were expected—these were people perceived to be in need of guidance and uplift. In contrast, the aforementioned white

⁹⁹⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris', 'Nightclub Life Over in Boston', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

⁹⁹⁷ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Club's Application to Change Name Held up'. *The Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page: 1.

⁹⁹⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris', 'Nightclub Life Over in Boston', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

⁹⁹⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, 'Lambs Club, Inc, Gets City Licence: Protest of Police Captain Kneeland Disregarded', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page: A1.

social set was expected to fulfil the role of paragons of good taste and conduct—and in doing so inspire those beneath them.

The Phalanx Club, or as it was also known ‘The Black and White Club’ - so called because its client base consisted of an even mix of blacks and whites, mostly from the South End of the city¹⁰⁰⁰ was consistently described in the Boston press as the most famous club in the city. It was not famous so much for its decor, entertainments, and fine foods, but rather because police raids were a recurrent theme at the venue.¹⁰⁰¹ In fact, the club was raided by ‘police and agents of the Watch and Ward’ for liquor on at least six occasions in between 1924 and 1925. On one particularly noteworthy occasion, during the early hours of January 19, 1925, agents of the Watch and Ward raided the club, arresting six men and a twenty-year old woman, in the process of seizing four gallons of liquor, which was allegedly on sale to guests.¹⁰⁰²

A trial ensued on April 16, 1925 in the Superior Court, represented by Assistant District Attorney Leonard, who offered evidence provided by the Watch and Ward and the state, brought charges against all six men. The state had on six previous occasions failed to convict anyone of liquor-related activities in the courts. In addition, on this occasion, once again, even with the support of the Watch and Ward, the state once more failed to bring about minor convictions. Phalanx heads C. F Sheridan and George Robinson, charged with keeping a disorderly house and maintaining a liquor nuisance, were found not guilty. Similarly, club members, John Davis, Louis Bennett, and Lincoln C. Pope, charged with an array of liquor related offences, including keeping and exposing liquor, and either selling or being complicit in the sale of liquor on the premises, were likewise found not guilty.¹⁰⁰³

¹⁰⁰⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris’, ‘Nightclub Life Over in Boston’, *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 1 and 9.

¹⁰⁰¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, ‘Phalanx Orchestra Club Trial Begins: Police Tell of Finding Liquor During Raid’. *New York Times*. Published: July 22, 1926. Page. 16.

¹⁰⁰² Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Phalanx Club Raided Again: Woman and Six Men Arrested’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: January 19, 1925. Page 2.

¹⁰⁰³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Phalanx Club Members Win’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: April 16, 1925. Page 3.

The failure of the police and the Watch and Ward to bring about convictions and enact any influence over the Phalanx gave the venue an air of almost invincibility. As a result, it quickly developed into a kind of insular microcosm of South End life. It was multicultural, prone to illegal activities, and a haven for the social and cultural elements that the Watch and Ward were trying to eradicate. But their efforts to expose, through employed agents, the untoward activities at the club thrust many of the negatives that the Watch and Ward were trying to eradicate from Boston life into the media and the consciousness of everyday Bostonians. With regularity, stories that pertained to violence, vice, drunkenness and worse, interracial dancing at the Phalanx appeared in the *Boston Globe* and on several occasions further afield in the *New York Times*.¹⁰⁰⁴

These stories told of how a lower court found a guest of the club guilty of being ‘idle and disorderly’ (the newspaper cited drunkenness and unsatisfactory dancing) and sentenced her to a term in the Sherborn Reformatory.¹⁰⁰⁵ On another occasion, a patrol officer at the club, trying to stop a disturbance was set upon by three men and seriously injured. Furthermore, while giving evidence at a previous liquor trial, a prohibition officer recalled that he visited the club and, spying a conviction, gladly accepted a glass of gin from a waiter. Moments later he claims his eyes began to burn, his skin prickled, and soon thereafter, he could not see anything. Purportedly, while in that condition he was robbed of \$100.¹⁰⁰⁶

In a general respect, the clientele at the Phalanx appear to have been fiercer and much more excitable than those at the Lambs’ Club. Without question, fighting was commonplace, so much so that the management and guests did not seem to make much of them. A story was told that on one night a man hit another reveller in the jaw and knocked him senseless, his head striking and breaking a railing before he hit the floor. Two black bouncers stepped forward and led the aggressor out. Two more carried away the unconscious man. Another man,

¹⁰⁰⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, ‘Phalanx Orchestra Club Trial Begins’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 22, 1926. Page 4.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris, ‘Nightclub Life Over in Boston’, *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 9.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid.

with a hammer and some nails, repaired the railing, and the dance went on as if nothing had happened.¹⁰⁰⁷

In the year following the Pickwick collapse, the Phalanx would continue to be raided by agents of the Watch and Ward. It was also closed on the grounds that it was unsafe for dancing and its owners were ordered to undertake repairs,¹⁰⁰⁸ and by September of 1926, after several closures, the club failed in its efforts to attain a city licence. While the club could continue to operate on the original charter granted to it by the state, no music, singing, or dancing could be permitted without a city licence. The licensing board gave as its reason for the refusal, four closely typewritten pages of complaints against the club written by the police and evidenced by the Watch and Ward. Unable to thwart the club in the courts, the Watch and Ward had succeeded in silencing the Phalanx through the simplest of measures, by denying it the right to provide the very entertainments upon which it appealed to its client base.

To a certain extent, the Phalanx and the Pickwick were similar. Both clubs hosted, according to the *Boston Globe*, questionable audiences - the Pickwick was, it appears, all-white - and both clubs were raided on several occasions for liquor related crimes, while the police were regularly asked to visit both premises to intervene in disturbances. One might conclude, however, based on press reports, that in fact the Pickwick was considerably more violent than the Phalanx. On February 9, 1925, a special officer of the headquarters liquor squad, John Laidlaw, was struck and almost knocked unconscious by a reveller.¹⁰⁰⁹ On another occasion, on March 23, 1925, a man was stabbed in the leg during a small riot at the club.¹⁰¹⁰ At the same time, several men, including one Mr James Montrose, were arrested for drunkenness.¹⁰¹¹ The Pickwick was, by no means, a reputable venue.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. Henry Harris', 'Nightclub Life Over in Boston', *The New York Times*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 9.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Examines Building of Phalanx Club: Inspector to Report if Changes have been made'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: January 28, 1926. Page 7.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, 'Officer Beaten in Raid Staged at Pickwick Club'. *New York Times*. Published: Maarch 23, 1925. Page 1.

¹⁰¹⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, 'Stabbing and Small Riot in Pickwick Club'. *New York Times*. Published: February 9, 1925. Page 1.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid.

In the immediate aftermath of the Pickwick disaster, the Boston media speculated over the reasons for the collapse. Official investigations and several disaster probes would eventually reveal, in the courts, that the building's structure had been weakened due to excessive amounts of water: some 10,000 gallons had been used to put out a fire at the club on the night of April 13. Initial reports, however, placed blame on an unruly cosmopolitan crowd, which quickly morphed into a disorderly crowd buoyed by jazz music and a black form of dancing.¹⁰¹² In fact, the day after the collapse, the *Boston Post* and the *Boston Globe* both led with stories that accused excited revellers, whipped into frenzy by live jazz music, of literally shaking the walls to the ground by frantically dancing in unison. Such a claim was given credence when a singer at the club made claims to support the aforementioned:¹⁰¹³

Dancing was going at a furious pace and everybody was having a lively time when without warning the plastering began to crumble. – Rocco Carparto aka ‘Teddy’ Williams Carparto.¹⁰¹⁴

Soon thereafter, critics honed in on specifics of the dance itself and concluded that revellers had been engaged in the ‘Charleston’, a fast fox trot introduced by black lyricist, Cecil Mack and musician, James P Johnson, in the all-Negro revue *Runnin' Wild*.¹⁰¹⁵ The Charleston would become the signature dance of the Jazz Age, easily eclipsing the bunny hug, the turkey trot, and the shimmy. In Boston, however, the dance's vigorous movements were blamed for the Pickwick collapse, and it was subsequently referred to as the ‘death dance’. Allegedly, some club patrons asserted that revellers had danced the Charleston so frantically that they had caused the lights on the dance floor to cut out in the immediate moments before plaster began to rain down on to the dance floor.

¹⁰¹² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, ‘Disaster Probe Again Delayed: Experts unable to give report on supports’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 10, 1925. Page 1.

¹⁰¹³ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, ‘35 Victims Identified: Cause of Crash still in Doubt: singer at club thinks Building was Shaken Down by Leaping Dancers’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 6, 1925. Page 1.

¹⁰¹⁴ Stu Beitler, ‘Rescuers Work Frantically in Search of Bodies in Pickwick Club Wreckage’. *Kingsport Times Tennessee*. Published: July 5, 1925. Page 1.

¹⁰¹⁵ Sandra L. Aberjhani., West, *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2003), 290.

The fact that no blacks were in the Pickwick at the time of the collapse counted for very little. For simply having an established association with the Charleston, blacks had inadvertently been burdened with the blame. The *Boston Globe*, in an effort to evidence such claims even went as far as to publish the sheet music for a jazz song they declared to be the last 'Heard by the Pickwick Club Victims'.¹⁰¹⁶ In the popular mind, the Charleston Dance and the Pickwick Collapse became interwoven in a cause-and-effect relationship. While city-wide club closures would only last for a short while, city officials, including members of the Watch and Ward, took the drastic step of banning the Charleston Dance outright, citing the Pickwick disaster. For years thereafter, as jazz swung and echoed loudly in other cities, in Boston bandleaders were told to turn it down when the dancing got too vigorous.

6. Speaking for blacks in Boston: early radio voices and developments toward network broadcasting

Don Slater suggested that the 1920s were the first times in which people believed themselves to be modern, inhabiting modernity; i.e., 'a contemporary state, not one being striven toward'.¹⁰¹⁷ This concept was underpinned by the transformation of America into a consumerist society during the decade. As new products were launched on to the market, the dominance of machines and the ideology that supported them became central to economic growth. Devices such as the toaster, the washing machine, and the vacuum cleaner promised an easier life and thus one that was more enjoyable. The purchase of new technologies rapidly became the focus of national expenditure. Higher wages for average Americans meant that for the first time in the country's history, 'spending, rather than saving came to be identified with prosperity',¹⁰¹⁸ earning the twenties the title of 'The Dollar Decade'.¹⁰¹⁹

¹⁰¹⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2. N7N56. No Author Attributed, 'Last Song Heard by Pickwick Victims', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 7, 1925. Page 7.

¹⁰¹⁷ Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (New York: Wiley, 1999), 13.

¹⁰¹⁸ J. H. Housh, *Censorship of the American Theatre in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). 73.

¹⁰¹⁹ G. D. Best., *The dollar decade: mammon and the machine in 1920s America* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003).

It was also a period of great cultural change. Jazz historian, Thomas J. Hennessey notes that the decade transformed America from a 'local, rural, homemade culture into a mass-produced, national, urban, media culture'.¹⁰²⁰ With this shift, American literature emerged from the monotonous tradition of naturalism into the daylight of modernism; and Hollywood found its voice and with it the commercial ascendancy of a medium that spoke directly to young people. Furthermore, with the advent and subsequent rise of the radio from a hobbyist's plaything to a staple of the American household, technology and culture were brought together in a way like never before. For the first time, leading musical acts such as Paul Whiteman's Orchestra were thrust into the living rooms of all who owned a receiver. As Michael John Hauptert asserts, 'no longer was it necessary to go out to the crowds or travel great distances to be entertained'.¹⁰²¹

The radio's impact on America is perhaps best exemplified in the way it changed the makeup of the family home. In the second half of the 1920s, it became a central piece of furniture in many households across the country, and greatly impacted the dynamics of an average day. Families would gather around the device and fall silent to hear news broadcasts, their favourite radio features, and popular music of the time. This in turn meant that for entertainers the radio quickly became a vital resource for transforming their cultural artistry into a means of livelihood. By the end of the decade, for example, radio had significantly assisted in the process of carrying the music of jazz artists such as Bix Beiderbecke, Earl Hines, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington from the cultural margins to the mainstream, transforming their compositions into an economically viable art form of commercial appeal.¹⁰²²

Central to early radio exploration and development was the city of Boston. Insofar as the success of the medium during its formative years was, for the most part, a national

¹⁰²⁰ T. J. Hennessey., *From Jazz to Swing: African-American Jazz Musicians and Their Music, 1890-1935* (Wayne State University Press, 1994). 103.

¹⁰²¹ Michael John Hauptert, *The Entertainment Industry* (Santa-Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), 142.

¹⁰²² Jean Pierre Leon, *Bix: The Definitive Biography of a Jazz Legend : Leon "Bix" Beiderbecke (1903-1931)* (London: A&C Black, 2005), xv.

progression, arguably nowhere else were the foundations for its success more decisively laid than in Boston. Through its hobbyists, early wireless clubs and societies and on to its pioneering amateurs (Harold J. Power)¹⁰²³ and leading entrepreneurs (including merchant, John Sheppard III) the city can lay claim to its share of pivotal advances in the growth of the medium: the first known continuous transmission, the earliest daily news program, the initial chain broadcast (Boston to New York), as well as occasional openings for black performers, notably African-American vaudeville stars Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake.¹⁰²⁴

However, in a general respect, opportunities for blacks across America in terms of work in broadcasting, performance, and technological advancement were few. As a microcosm of this, Boston radio during the period can be considered, through taste preferences and programming, to have reinforced notions of white cultural dominance and superiority. While, moreover, through entertainment such blackface minstrelsy, popularised by ‘Amos ‘n’ Andy’, the medium of radio was also utilised to promote appropriated white forms of black musical, theatrical, and literary expression, such as vaudeville, ragtime, and jazz. In one respect, this form of entertainment and others like it, assisted in transforming black forms of expression principally deemed uncouth and base by the city’s media and wealthy into forms that were more palatable for mainstream white audiences. Conversely, however, this phenomenon only served to subject black art in the city to a double oppression. Not only did they deny blacks the right to expression, they also appropriated their nuanced forms of artistry into a voice that was anything but their own.

Central to the wealth of material that exists on the early history of radio broadcasting is the idea that the people who orchestrated its birth and subsequent growth were white and male. This as William Randle Jr. asserts, is principally because a lack of attention has been

¹⁰²³ Power founded AMRAD (American Radio and Research Corporation), which manufactured radio equipment at Tufts University in Medford Hill, about four miles outside of Boston. Michael Blanding, ‘Goooooooood Morning, Medford After One Hundred Years In The Radio Biz, Tufts Can Claim Its Share Of “First”’. *Tufts Magazine*. Fall 2010. Available Online: <http://www.tufts.edu/alumni/magazine/fall2010/planet-tufts/good-morning.html>.

¹⁰²⁴ Donna Halper., ‘African Americans and Early Radio’. *The Old Radio Times: The Official Publication of the Old-Time Radio Researchers*. Number 32. July 2008. p. 12.

given to the role of black Americans in the mass entertainment industry, notably by specialists.¹⁰²⁵ The task of constructing a black history during the formative years of radio is furthermore hampered by the nature of available source material. Whilst there is a wealth of history in newspapers and radio magazines from the period, abstracting specific black entertainment from the mass of schedules contained within these is a formidable proposition. Whilst ample in volume, the listings are largely indistinct. If not well established, names of engineers, broadcasters, and entertainers were regularly unpublished. As an example, instead, all-encompassing headings such as ‘Musical program’ and ‘jazz performance’ were used to denote the type of entertainment a listener could expect to hear.¹⁰²⁶

There was also rarely a defined formula for the broadcasting of recorded music. Radio stations in general appear to have presented a medley of styles from concert and classical bands to jazz and blues hits. Between 1922 and 1925, Greater Boston’s WGI (operated by Harold J. Power), and competing stations, simply classified time allotted to this kind of radio play under non-descript headings such as ‘Program of Selections on the Phonograph’, which offered nothing specific in terms of content.¹⁰²⁷ The only indication that jazz was a feature on Boston radio in the early years of the 1920s, for example, stems from the numerous objections that were printed in press reports from disgruntled members of the public. Such reports consistently pertained to what the public perceived to be the growing dominance of jazz (a base, black-heavy artistic form) over the airwaves, with one report declaring that ‘Being Deaf has Compensations in these Radio Days’.¹⁰²⁸ Consistent moans in these reports stated that owing to the airing of jazz, the ‘classics’ – such as ‘Tchaikovsky’ - were being abandoned.¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁵ William Randle Jr., ‘Black Entertainers on Radio’. *The Black Perspective in Music*. Vol. 5, No. 1 Spring, 1977. 67-74. And Crystal M. Flemming, Lorraine E. Roses, ‘Black cultural capitalists: African-American elites and the organization of the arts in early twentieth century Boston’, *Poetics* 35, 2007.

¹⁰²⁶ Lloyd Greene, ‘Radio Broadcasts by Lloyd Greene’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 26, 1923. P. 14.

¹⁰²⁷ Lloyd Greene, ‘Radio Broadcasts by Lloyd Greene’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 31, 1923. P. 17.

¹⁰²⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Being Deaf has Compensations in these Radio Days, says Dumm’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 28, 1930. Page A21.

¹⁰²⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Abandoned the Classics for America’s Modern Jazz’, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: July 9, 1930. P. 57.

Jazz's strong presence in radio programming also prompted an array of objectionable comments from well-regarded individuals – which were duly printed in the Boston press. These include members of the Massachusetts Women's Federation Board;¹⁰³⁰ director of the Bureau of Investigation, Herbert Hoover;¹⁰³¹ and high prelates of the Vatican.¹⁰³² In March of 1924 then director of WGI radio, H. D. Miller addressed an audience at the city's State House and remarked that 'Radio had drained jazz dry', adding that 'Talk on fish is worth more to a broadcasting station today'.¹⁰³³ Thus, insofar as evidence – data collated from local broadcasts in the early years of programming – indicates that classics outnumbered jazz almost ten to one on Boston's airwaves, jazz nonetheless had enough of a presence to at least generate objections.¹⁰³⁴

While jazz was, arguably, a black music, it was whites who consistently achieved the greatest successes for the genre. For example, popular artists of the jazz genre up until 1927 who appeared on Boston radio were almost always white: Paul Whiteman, Ted Lewis, and Guy Lombardo, Gene Rodemich,¹⁰³⁵ and Jean Goldkette. The biggest local selling artist of the decade was white violinist, Malcolm Gray Hallett, closely followed by Toots Mondello.¹⁰³⁶ It is difficult to establish with any certainty a consistent black presence for jazz on Boston radio before 1927; thus one can only speculate, based on the varied forms of black entertainment provided by WGI, WNAC, and other Boston stations whether some forms of black jazz would

¹⁰³⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Criticises Jazz and Radio Programs', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 31, 1924. P. 13A

¹⁰³¹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'How to make Radio Worth While is the Real problem, says Hoover'. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 14, 1924. P. A4

¹⁰³² Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Vatican Condemns Broadcasting Jazz', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: August 28, 1927. P. A24

¹⁰³³ H. D. Miller in Author unknown, 'Radio Talk on Fish is Better than Jazz. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: March 1, 1924. P. 1.

¹⁰³⁴ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Concert Selections Outnumber Jazz Strains on Air Tonight', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 19, 1925. Page A15.

¹⁰³⁵ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'What's on the Air?', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 23, 1927. P. 32.

¹⁰³⁶ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext,. Call # AN2.M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'Big Brother Club has Helped Many to Become Radio Stars', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 6, 1929. P. B23.

have featured in general phonograph programs and during segments allotted to live performance.

In a general respect, away from jazz, Boston's major stations did provide airtime to blacks, and on occasion set precedents in doing so. Wealthy radio entrepreneur and store owner John Sheppard's WNAC, operating out of the fourth floor studios of the Sheppard Department Store in downtown Boston,¹⁰³⁷ brought the black musical 'Shuffle Along' by Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle to the city in early November of 1922.¹⁰³⁸ As Donna L. Halper asserts, this is believed to have been the first live radio performance of a Broadway musical on American radio.¹⁰³⁹ In the same year, WGI gave African-American actor, Charles Gilpin, appearing on the Boston stage in 'The Emperor Jones'¹⁰⁴⁰ (a 1920 play by American dramatist Eugene O'Neill) a platform to read prose on air;¹⁰⁴¹ while in the following year, WGI broadcast Davis Risdon's play, 'A Black Trump', described as a Negro comedy.¹⁰⁴²

Furthermore, while broadcast listings for WNAC, WGI and also another Boston station, WEEI (printed regularly in the Boston press) offer little in terms of what they broadcasted in the way of jazz, they do show that these stations intermittently broadcast some forms of black music, with the most prominent form being 'Negro Spirituals'. Broadcast compiler Lloyd G Greene's publications in the *Boston Daily Globe* between 1923 and 1929 show that Songs like *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*;¹⁰⁴³ *Ol' Man River*;¹⁰⁴⁴ and *All God's Chillun' Got Wings*¹⁰⁴⁵ were featured on WNAC, WGI, and WEEI with some regularity. However,

¹⁰³⁷ A family-owned business establishment, WNAC quickly emerged as a frontrunner of radio in North-America - Alexander Russo, *Points on the Dial: Golden Age Radio beyond the Networks* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010), 56-57.

¹⁰³⁸ Donna L. Halper in Jessie Carney Smith, *Black Firsts: 4,000 Ground-Breaking and Pioneering Historical Events* (Michigan: Visible Ink Press, 2012), 2007.

¹⁰³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁰ The Emperor Jones: 'A Black porter attains power in the West Indies by exploiting the superstitions and ignorance of an island's residents.' - Eugene O'Neill, *The Emperor Jones* (New York: Courier Corporation, 2013).

¹⁰⁴¹ Barry Mishkind, 'This is the FAQ section of The Broadcast Archive: Other Firsts'. Updates: February 17, 2013. Available: http://www.olderadio.com/current/bc_1sts.htm. Accessed: June 17, 2014.

¹⁰⁴² Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. Lloyd G. Greene, 'Radio Broadcasts by Lloyd G. Greene', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: May 12, 1923. P. 5.

¹⁰⁴³ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'What's on the Air?', *Daily Boston Globe*. Published: September 18, 1929. Page. 25.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'What's on the Air?', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 8, 1927. Page. 33.

insofar that these were black forms of musical expression, on repeated occasions the task of delivering them was attributed to whites rather than blacks.¹⁰⁴⁶

Individuals such as Anglo-American tenor, Frederick Gunster, were referred to in scheduling lists as interpreters of ‘American Negro Music’ and presented the forms through a portal of white hegemony, which in turn denied blacks the right to orate the struggles contained within those songs on their own terms and in their own voices.¹⁰⁴⁷ This practice was extended to ‘Negro Rhapsodies’ performed by whites such as Rubin Goldmark at Symphony Hall,¹⁰⁴⁸ and later radio chatter on the ‘Negro Dialect’, which was delivered by ‘a charming (white) southerner’, Mrs Mary Chesley.¹⁰⁴⁹ The purpose of this approach to entertainment by whites was billed as an opportunity to soften prejudice against black entertainment forms but also to broaden the white repertoire, offering something new that might pique ratings. Overall, this approach merely serves to clarify just how inconsequential Boston’s black population was considered by radio heads and broadcasters.¹⁰⁵⁰

One of the most popular radio acts of the time was Harlem based, Amos ‘N’ Andy. This duo, a blackface minstrelsy act that regularly appeared on Boston’s WEEI station, consisted of two white actors.¹⁰⁵¹ Their brand of entertainment principally comprised ‘song and chatter’ comedy routines presented in Negro dialects of the South, and would permeate much of the latter twenties.¹⁰⁵² ‘Amos’, whose real name was Freeman Gosden, was raised in Richmond, Virginia, and developed a purported ‘thorough knowledge of Negro ways, talk, troubles, joys, and mental slants’ in childhood before teaming up with fellow Anglo-American, ‘Andy’, aka

¹⁰⁴⁶ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘What’s on the Air?’, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: February 20, 1929. Page. 32.

¹⁰⁴⁷ In the same way that radio magazines of the time refrained from showing black engineers at work undertaking what were deemed to be white jobs, radio stations saw fit to employ leading white entertainers to fulfil black entertainment requests.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Negro Rhapsody at Symphony Concert’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: October 20, 1928. Page. 5.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, ‘Negro Dialect Stories Over WEEI Tonight’. *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: December 20, 1927. Page 27.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Boston Public Library. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed. ‘Negro Increase in Boston 20 Percent’, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: February 26, 1921. Page. 3.

¹⁰⁵¹ Mordaunt Hall, Amos ‘N’ Andy Open Mayfair Theatre: Radio Team Cause Hilarity in Check and Double Check at R.K.O.’s New Cinema. *The New York Times*. Published: November 1, 1930.

¹⁰⁵² Elizabeth McLeod, *The Original Amos ‘n’ Andy: Freeman Gosden, Charles Correll and the 1928-1943 Radio Serial* (New York: McFarland, 2005).

Charles Correll.¹⁰⁵³ The appeal of the duo was great, particularly amongst younger audiences. For example, English Grade students in Jerseyville, Illinois voted ‘Amos ‘N’ Andy’ into the top twelve greatest Americans in a school-organised poll, just behind Lincoln and Washington but ahead of the General Grant and many other esteemed individuals.¹⁰⁵⁴

In August of 1929 the duo signed a long-term contract with networking broadcaster, NBC to appear nightly for fifteen minutes at 11 pm Central Eastern Time.¹⁰⁵⁵ Radio moguls, seeking to capitalise on Amos ‘N’ Andy’s youth appeal, however, moved their slot to a more family orientated time of 7 pm in December. This change, however, caused issues on the West Coast. 7 pm in Boston meant 5 pm in the Rocky Mountain regions and 4 pm on the Pacific Coast – times when most were still in the office and the factory. More than 100,000 letters, telegrams, and telephone calls poured in to the sponsors of the show ‘Pepsodent Toothpaste’.¹⁰⁵⁶ Protestors warned they would boycott the company if ‘Amos ‘N’ Andy’ were not put back on the air at a ‘decent hour’. Even the Secretary of State of Colorado joined in the protest. The resolution to the issue was that the duo was asked to perform twice, broadcasting from 7:00 pm to 7:15 pm over the Eastern Network, and 10:30 pm to 10:45 pm on the Western network.¹⁰⁵⁷ This proved, somewhat, how appealing white appropriations of black entertainment forms had become in Boston and across America; to an extent, whites preferred to hear an appropriation than an original expression.

While a large volume of active amateur and developing professional broadcasters was beneficial to the development of radio in 1910 and similarly by 1920, in the year of 1925 the medium had outpaced the technicalities of usage allowances as per the vague guidelines of

¹⁰⁵³ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. Frank A. Smothers, ‘The Real Amos ‘N’ Andy’, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: June 30, 1929. P. B3.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. Special dispatch to the Globe, Amos ‘N’ Andy Among 12 Greatest Americans, so students decide. *Daily Boston Globe*. Published: October 11, 1930. P. 5.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, Amos ‘N’ Andy Join NBC Chain. *Daily Boston Globe*. Published: July 20, 1929. P. 56.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, Amos ‘n’ Andy, *Daily Boston Globe*. Published: December 3, 1929. P. 22.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Ibid.

congressional regulation, established in 1912 when radio related simply to ship-to-shore broadcasting. At the close of 1925, the American government allocated a mere eighty-nine wavelengths for broadcasting, over which operated 15,111 amateur stations, 1,902 ship stations, 553 land stations for maritime use, and 536 broadcasting stations.¹⁰⁵⁸ Radio's open forum had, in the short space of five years, become unmanageable, with established, professional broadcasters such as WNAC being impeded by a melee of lesser stations. As the *New York Times* noted, the radio signal almost anywhere on the dial sounded like 'the whistle of the peanut stand'.¹⁰⁵⁹

This posed a particular problem for entrepreneurs such as John Sheppard III who had invested in the delivery of a more stable radio service, which had assisted in the development of the first radio network. In 1926, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), led by David Sarnoff, built on the foundations that had been laid by WNAC and refined the linked broadcast into a business model of unprecedented success by creating a national radio audience.¹⁰⁶⁰ In addition to streamlining the sale of advertising, NBC established contracts with affiliate stations, such as Chicago's WMAQ, across the country to provide an audio feed of its programmes through a telephone line, which was then distributed to the general populace by the station's radio transmitter.¹⁰⁶¹ Emphasis was thus on the professional notions of delivering a functional and consistent service.

While at one time, the 'undisciplined and unregulated' voice of the amateur had assisted in the rapid development of radio, by 1927 it was causing much public outcry, with stations such as Boston's WEEI and WNAC both considering moving their antennae from the city to counteract strained airwaves.¹⁰⁶² The amateur was also now interfering 'with corporate

¹⁰⁵⁸ Juan González, Joseph Torres, *News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media* (New York: Verso Books, 2011), 201.

¹⁰⁵⁹ THE RADIO ACT OF 1927 AS A PRODUCT OF PROGRESSIVISM, Volume 2, Act 2. Mississippi State University. Available: <http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/mediahistory/mhmmjour2-2.htm>. Accessed: June 30, 2014.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Louise M Benjamin, *The NBC Advisory Council and Radio Programming, 1926-1945* (Illinois: SIU Press, 2009).

¹⁰⁶¹ Sydney W Head, Thomas D. Spann, Michael A. McGregor, *Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Electronic Media* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 34.

¹⁰⁶² Joseph Dinneen, Radio Stations May Move Antennae from Boston, *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: November 6, 1927. P. 18.

goals of delivering programming and advertising on a dependable schedule to a mass audience'.¹⁰⁶³ As an unregulated service, radio provided a platform to anyone with the required know-how and equipment to reach a forum with twenty-five million listeners. This was exploited by corporations such as automobile dealerships and was even utilised by churches, schools, local governments, and on occasion local, touring, and travelling jazz bands.¹⁰⁶⁴

The growth of the radio medium in Boston, from its vast amateur interests to its more refined entrepreneurships, presented both opportunities and restrictions for black citizens. In one respect, the unfettered and unregulated arena of amateur radio provided the opportunity for the everyman to be heard by as many people as could be reached in any one evening of broadcasting. However, reaching people was, above all else, one of the main problems of existing in the unregulated arena of amateur radio. Unable to achieve consistent airtime on more powerful and far-reaching stations, such as WNAC, blacks were left to jockey for space on unstable and often congested airwaves, which meant their music either did not carry to any audience, or was intermittently heard because it was cut short by more powerful broadcasts that crossed over its ether.

In 1927, an Attorney General's decision declared that the Radio Act Written in 1912 did not give the Secretary of Commerce authority to assign wavelengths. In order to end the chaos, congress hurriedly passed the Radio Act that remains in effect to the present day.¹⁰⁶⁵ The Act established that the federal government had the authority to regulate the nation's airwaves. The Act also revoked all existing licences, and required that all stations as a condition of possessing a licence serve 'the public interest, convenience or necessity'.¹⁰⁶⁶ By the close of the

¹⁰⁶³ Mark Goodman in William H. Lesser, *American Business Regulation: Understand, Survive, and Thrive* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2014), 285.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Harvard University library. Baker Business - Historical Collections, Baker Old Class. Government Documents. Call # YH U585a. United States. Federal Trade Commission, *Utility Corporations: Letters from the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission Transmitting, in Response to Senate Resolution No. 83, 70th Congress, a Monthly Report on the Electric Power and Gas Utilities Inquiry, Issues 60-61* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), 595-562.

¹⁰⁶⁵ United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Interstate Commerce., Amendment of Radio act of 1927 ... Report, to accompany H.R. 7716, Submitted by Mr. Dill. Published: December 14, 1932. Available Online: <http://id.lib.harvard.edu/aleph/004145086/catalog>. Accessed: July 12, 2015.

¹⁰⁶⁶ The Radio Act of 1927. An act for the regulation of radio communications and for other purposes. Public Law No. 632, February 23, 1927, 69th Congress.

decade, over three million homes were receiving orchestral performances, jazz concerts, vaudeville routines, and musical revues.

Nonetheless, for some blacks, the medium opened up the possibility for their literary expressions and music, such as jazz, to be heard nationally. Between 1927 and 1930, following the shift of radio to a broadcast-networking format, Duke Ellington and his Orchestra delivered over ninety live performances for American radio stations, such as WABC, New York;¹⁰⁶⁷ WEAN, Providence;¹⁰⁶⁸ WEEI, and WNAC, Boston.¹⁰⁶⁹ During this time, Boston-born saxophonists Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges became full-time, essential members of Ellington's Orchestra. In the years 1927 and 1928, Ellington and his Orchestra achieved five top twenty and one top ten hit. By 1930, they were sat atop of the billboard charts with the song 'Three Little Words', proving that blacks and jazz had a place in the American cultural spectrum.

By 1929, African-Americans like Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong were mainstays on leading radio networks. In this respect, the radio provided Anglo-Americans, who were otherwise reluctant to veer out of their social sets or communities to receive alternative culture, the opportunity to experience black music and performance in the comfort of their homes. Thus, in addition to the stage, and in conjunction with the development of record production, the radio served as an additional medium for the projection of the black voice, both in a literal and a metaphoric sense. Whilst the limited airtime that was offered to blacks during the formative years of radio did reinforce notions of white dominance, when they were heard it brought a culture that otherwise existed on the periphery into the mainstream. As such, the radio assisted in transforming black music like the blues and jazz into a dialogue: speaking requires not only that someone listen but someone reply, too. In this respect, even if the response was a rejection of the art, it had still been heard and provoked a reaction.

¹⁰⁶⁷Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. Lloyd G. Greene, 'Radio Broadcasts by Lloyd G. Greene', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: February 28, 1929. Page. 23.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Boston Daily Globe. BPL - Central Microtext. Call # AN2 .M4B64. No Author Attributed, 'What's on the Air: Radio Broadcasts', *Boston Daily Globe*. Published: March 17, 1929. P. B8.

7. Boston Jazz, 1919 – 1924: Boston to New York: first wave migration and the amateur radio craze

The general opinion, cited by jazz historians such as Thomas J. Hennessey¹⁰⁷⁰ and Keith Waters,¹⁰⁷¹ is that the American 'East Coast jazz sound' was born in New York and that Harlem subsequently became its cradle. In principle, this particular sound abided by the core elements of New Orleans' jazz - improvisation along the melody line, syncopation, and a soulful swing – whilst developing rudimental nuances based on rich, spiritual dimensions (the proselytization of the music to religious audiences) in conjunction with the emergence of 'syncopated orchestras'.¹⁰⁷² In this respect, for example, ragtime was appropriated in a manner that made standard chords 'stride'¹⁰⁷³ through a particular tune, giving rise to Harlem Stride Piano playing: an elaboration on existing rags by adding melodic embellishments and increasing the tempo of the music.¹⁰⁷⁴ One of the most famous pieces of this kind was James P. Johnson's *Carolina Shout*,¹⁰⁷⁵ which was rooted in the ring shout dance of West Africa.¹⁰⁷⁶

In addition to Johnson, the aforementioned amalgamation assisted many musicians plying their trade on New York's stages, including Ernest Hogan, James Europe, and the great pianist, Thomas Fats Waller during the 1910s.¹⁰⁷⁷ Many of their compositions pooled ragtime, stride, and early jazz inflections to conjure up-tempo pieces that would become the trademark of the brash spirit and optimism of black cultural development in New York during the Jazz Age. This development assisted in broadening the boundaries of jazz beyond 1920s styling:

¹⁰⁷⁰ Thomas J. Hennessey, *From Jazz to Swing: African-American Jazz Musicians and Their Music, 1890-1935* (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 42-46.

¹⁰⁷¹ Henry Martin, Keith Waters, *Jazz: The First 100 Years* (New York: Cengage Learning, 2011).

¹⁰⁷² Mark Robert Schneider, *African Americans in the Jazz Age: A Decade of Struggle and Promise* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 86-89.

¹⁰⁷³ 'Many technical definitions of stride piano dwell on the left-hand pattern. The current popular definition asserts that "the stride effect is produced by the left hand hitting a single note on the first and third beats and a chord of three or four notes on the second and fourth beat.' James P. Johnson in Scott E. Brown, Robert Hillbert, James P. Johnson: a case of mistaken identity (Maryland: Scarecrow Press and the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University, 1986), 120.

¹⁰⁷⁴ 'Stride had an oompah sound in the left hand and a structure that was like a march' - Carin T. Ford, *Duke Ellington: "I Live with Music"* (New Jersey: Enslow Publishers, Inc, 2007), 28.

¹⁰⁷⁵ James P. Johnson, 'Carolina Shout'. CD Album; Biograph Records – BCD 105. 1988 (Original: 1921).

¹⁰⁷⁶ Mark Robert Schneider, *African Americans in the Jazz Age: A Decade of Struggle and Promise* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 87.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Ibid., 86-87.

Mary Lou's Mass is a particular case in point; this record combined the rich and vibrant traditions of jazz with the unique spiritual dimensions and syncopated elements of the American East Coast sound.¹⁰⁷⁸ Clive Barnes of the *New York Times* referred to the work as 'strong and joyful music, with a spirit which cuts across all religious boundaries'.¹⁰⁷⁹

While New York can be credited with the birth of the East Coast jazz sound, all-too often as a result of this, the city is considered to be the only significant place along the coast where jazz was fostered. Consequently, this has often resulted in the idea that not only did jazz arise in New York but anything and everything significant that occurred thereafter in the city was principally a by-product of its cultural climate, cultural vanguards, and entertainment hotspots, principally Harlem. This idea has given rise to a disregard for the part that neighbouring cities, such as Boston, played in the evolution of the East Coast sound outright as well as the swift establishment of New York as its jazz hub. All too often there has been a tendency to see every jazz success that transpired in New York during the Jazz Age as one that was entirely conceived, nurtured, and celebrated within the city's contours, and thus categorise these under the umbrella terminology of 'New York jazz'.

The problem with this approach is that it is far too narrow and thus overlooks the contributing factors, developmental phases, and conditions that helped to cultivate and advance jazz in the city to a position of steady accomplishment. Essential to New York's success as the adopted upholder of jazz from 1919 onwards was its cosmopolitan appeal, its vibrant and emergent black community, situated in Harlem, as well as its passion for culture. These factors made the city a magnet for aspirational and proficient jazz musicians, and ultimately the city benefitted from a steady influx of leading players from New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Kansas City, and time and again, Boston.¹⁰⁸⁰ From these

¹⁰⁷⁸ Mary Lou Williams, *Mary Lou's Mass*. Mary Records - M 102. 1975. Vinyl LP, Album

¹⁰⁷⁹ Harvard University Library. Microforms (Lamont). Harvard Depository. Film S 3780. Nelson Algren, 'Excellent Cassettes: Dark Came Early in that Country (M120)', *The Critic*, Volume 32. 1973. 87.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Colin A. Palmer, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, *Encyclopedia of African-American culture and history: the Black experience in the Americas, Volume 3* (New York City: Macmillan Reference USA, 2006), 1167.

cities arrived a consistent stream of wonderful talent, including Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Bix Beiderbecke, Count Basie, Sidney Bechet, Earl Hines, and Vic Dickenson.¹⁰⁸¹

While these black musicians benefitted from New York's more accepting cultural climate and Harlem's jazz-centric music venues, in turn they brought a collective yet eclectic array of cultural influences, inimitable personal experiences and musical nuances, pooled from birthplaces, upbringings, and touring circuits. These cultures, experiences, and variations in style underpinned many of their compositions and performances with a particular richness. This in the first instance gave New York's jazz a diversity and vanguard foundation that helped to sustain its relevance alongside concert and classical music, while also consistently propelling the music, through stylistic progressions, to new heights. In this sense, New York can be seen as a jazz finishing school, as a place that provided the stages upon which talent developed across America was able to project their artistry. The combined impact of their works amounted to a unique and ultimately potent black voice.

Boston's relationship with New York is certainly a contentious subject. Today talk of the two cities conjures flashbacks of great match-ups on their respective baseball fields. But long before the days of Ted Williams, Babe Ruth, and Joe DiMaggio, the two cities established a transportation rivalry that lasted almost a century. When New York completed the Erie Canal in 1825, Boston grew so envious that it stopped referring to its rival by name: Massachusetts Governor Levi Lincoln would only call it 'a neighbouring state'. When Boston responded by building the country's first true railroad system in 1897, it was New York's turn to worry about keeping pace with its 'enterprising neighbours'. It would take them seven years to follow suit.

In the realms of culture, the emergence of Harlem as an artistic and cultural centre for blacks, coupled with New York's overall position at the helm of American modernism during 1919 marked the moment when a general shift in cultural power occurred.¹⁰⁸² This shift can be

¹⁰⁸¹ Leonard Feather, ed., Ira Gitler, *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁰⁸² Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 111-114.

loosely defined as the moment when New York's racial and cultural diversity displaced the Anglo-American, Victorian gentility of Boston-led New England, and arguably the starting point when jazz began its steady ascension to the position of America's classical music.¹⁰⁸³ By 1920, New York had married the literature and refined culture of educated middle-class blacks with the purported 'ill-educated multitudes' and New Negro factions amongst its ranks.¹⁰⁸⁴ In this respect, New York became ethnically and culturally mixed in such a fashion that Anglo-Americans, blacks, immigrants, and U.S minorities were engaged in unprecedented interaction, to the point where, as Ann Douglas notes, 'conservative race ideologies of the day' saw such a development as heralding 'the imminent era of miscegenation',¹⁰⁸⁵ but also the emergence of a prominent and significant black voice.

Essential to this voice, as previously noted, was the multifarious and eclectic layers of New York's culture and creativity, which in the main consisted of homegrown talent and musical proficiencies sourced from beyond its contours. In terms of the latter, alongside cities such as Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Kansas City, Boston can be considered an important contributor to the growth and overall success of New York jazz, from the 1910s onwards. This contribution, in one respect, consisted of a long list of musicians, both black and white, who swapped Boston for the 'Big Apple'.¹⁰⁸⁶ Of the many, players such as pianist, Frank Signorelli; guitarist and saxophonist, Robert 'Bobby' Johnson; pianist and band leader, Joseph A. 'Joe'; drummer, Kaiser Marshall, and of course more well known transferences, including drummer, Tom Whaley, and saxophonists, Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges.¹⁰⁸⁷

¹⁰⁸³ Nicholas M. Evans, *Writing Jazz: Race, Nationalism, and Modern Culture in the 1920s* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 108.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Paul Finkelman, *Volume I: Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-first Century Five-volume Set* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 23.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ann Douglas in Nicholas M. Evans, *Writing Jazz: Race, Nationalism, and Modern Culture in the 1920s* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 108.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Of particular note, Dixon grew up in New Jersey and plied his trade in jazz clubs in Boston before going on to perform consistently with Sam Wooding, and Ralph 'Shrimp' Jones, at the Nest Club in New York City during 1922.¹⁰⁸⁶ Among the musicians Dixon played with while under Wooding and Henderson were Kaiser Marshall, Louis Armstrong, Ralph Escudero, Coleman Hawkins, Don Redman, and Elmer Chambers. He also played in small ensembles accompanying great singers such as Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Trixie Smith, and Alberta Hunter in the 1920s - Craig Martin Gibbs, *Black Recording Artists, 1877-1926: An Annotated Discography* (North Carolina: Mcfarland, 2012), 237.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Leonard Feather, ed., Ira Gitler, *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007).

One of the first Bostonian jazz players to make a significant impact in New York was Anglo-American, Fillippo ‘Phil Napoleon’ Napoli.¹⁰⁸⁸ Born in 1901, Napoli was performing by the age of five and by sixteen had recorded as a cornet soloist. In the second half of the 1910s, he left Boston and found Brooklyn jazz so inspirational that he formed the Original Memphis Five with the aforementioned pianist, Frank Signorelli.¹⁰⁸⁹ One of the earliest Dixieland bands in the country, the Original Memphis Five made a number of important recordings over a ten-year period, beginning in 1921. During 1923, they recorded with Memphis-born African-American female vocalist, Alberta Hunter. This was the first time in recording history that a black singer had fronted an all-white group on record.¹⁰⁹⁰

While the Boston to New York talent drain consistently strengthened the cultural position of the latter, it severely inhibited the cultural spectrum of black Boston and in turn the presence of a native and nuanced black voice, projected via a portal of early jazz expression. In this respect the local Boston voice became fragmented as it was transferred and, arguably, buried in amongst the melee of the national black voice, and in particular that of New York (and specifically, Harlem’s New Negro movement). In the context of jazz history, therefore, Boston can be regarded more as a place for jazz outsourcing than scene making. In this sense, the city served as a training ground for its native and resident players as well as a much-used thoroughfare for aspiring national musicians seeking to hone and refine their craft before transferring it to the stages of leading jazz venues, such as those in New York.

In addition to Harry ‘Bish’ Hicks, Boston was home to many figures, both black and white, who operated in the capacities of on-the-job instructors for a generation of local musicians. One such example was Tasker Crosson’s band, a New England touring group that honed its skills on the college circuit and the dance halls in Roxbury and the South End.¹⁰⁹¹ While Crosson is principally known for his work with The Ten Statesmen (or twelve, or

¹⁰⁸⁸ Frank Hoffman., *Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound* (London: Routledge, 2004).

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Emmett George Price., *Encyclopedia of African American Music* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2004 Google e-Book), 410.

¹⁰⁹¹ William F. Lee, *People in Jazz: Jazz Keyboard Improvisors of the 19th & 20th Centuries: Preragtime, Blues, Folk and Minstrel, Early Ragtime, Dixieland, Ragtime-stride, Blues-boogie, Swing, Prebop, Bop* (New York: Columbia Lady Music, 1984), 74-75.

fourteen, depending on the job) during the 1930s, his entire career stretches from 1920 to 1950, however, and his influence was certainly felt during the Jazz Age. Boston pianist and arranger Charlie Cox said in a mid 1980's interview, Crosson's band was often referred to as a schoolin' band – a place where youngsters might go to learn how to read and transpose before advancing to better bands.¹⁰⁹²

In the early days of jazz, long before the music was codified and taught in academia, the magical mysteries of the music were - as the old timers would say – 'learned on the bandstand'. Mentoring was the key. While playing with the jazz stars of the day was virtually unheard of - unless of course, you were fortunate enough to find them at an after-hours jam session – role models were found in many bars in many cities all across America. The opportunity to perform in any capacity, but especially to a receptive audience, gave many aspirational jazz players, including those in Boston, the opportunity to air their appropriated takes on the popular styles and sounds they had heard on the radio.

Through such channels, Boston consistently produced excellent musicians. In addition to notables such as Charlie Dixon, Kaiser Marshall, Phil Napoleon, and Tom Whaley, saxophonists, Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges, Charlie Holmes, Howard 'Swan' Johnson, and Nuncio 'Toots' Mondello make up the bulk of a best of Boston list for the period in question. However, while these individuals matured in Boston's playgrounds, school bands, and local venues, they all left the city during the Jazz Age and prospered elsewhere, often continuing the steady flow that Charles Wright 'Charlie' Johnson had initiated years earlier.

Similarly, Perley Breed, born in Danvers, Massachusetts, sometime in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, was both a band leader and a contributor to the nurturing of Boston musicians. Several players, including clarinetist, Brad Gowans, and song-writing pianists, Sid

¹⁰⁹² 'The list of musicians who passed through Crosson's band is impressive, starting with Sabby Lewis and three of his longtime associates, drummer Joe Booker, saxophonist Ricky Pratt, and trumpeter and arranger Gene Caines. Pianist Ernie Trotman replaced Lewis, and stayed for three years. Guitarists Irving Ashby and Tom Brown, drummer Bobby Donaldson, and trumpeters Jabbo Jenkins and Andy Kelton were Statesmen. And among the musicians who played their very first gigs with Crosson were bassist Lloyd Trotman, drummer Alan Dawson, and trumpeter Lennie Johnson'. - Richard Vacca, 'July 9, 1904: Tasker Crosson's Academy of Music'.. On Troy Street. Published: July 10, 2013. Available: <http://troystreet.com/tspots/2013/07/10/july-9-1904-tasker-crossons-academy-of-music>. Accessed: July 1, 2015.

Reinherz and Curley Mahr, refined their abilities in bands led by Breed, before establishing themselves on the New York circuit. Of note here, in 1924, Reinherz released *Mah Jong / The Boston Trot*, a 10 inch, 78 rpm shellac release, recorded in New York and released on the Gennett Label, which had previously recorded Jelly Roll Morton, Bix Beiderbecke, and King Oliver's band, which was equipped with a young Louis Armstrong. In the late 1920s, accompanied by several Bostonians – the Starita Brothers, the Cape Ann Trumpeter, Sylvester Ahola; and saxophonist Johnny Heifer – Perley Breed toured New York, Paris, and London.

There were of course musicians who chose to stay. While the city's saxophonists tended to forge careers outside of Boston, several of the city's pianists hung around and made decent careers for themselves as support musicians: there was an abundance of decent pianists spread across America and thus demand for these was considerably reduced. Amongst those that stayed were Highland Diggs, Preston 'Sandy' Sandiford, and Mabel Robinson. There were also musicians who left, made a name for themselves elsewhere and then returned to Boston. In addition, Wendell Philips Culley, a trumpeter, stayed in Boston until 1931, when he followed so many before him to New York. He found early work playing with Horace Henderson and Cab Calloway, before taking up employment with Noble Sissle.

The siphoning off of Boston talent to New York might in one sense be viewed as the main factor as to why the city has not received the kind of attention one might expect of a place that produced black jazz greats such as Whaley, Carney, and Hodges.¹⁰⁹³ This is also, perhaps, simply a by-product of the transient nature of jazz itself.¹⁰⁹⁴ For often, little consideration is given to the process (i.e. the background and the roots) that conjured the most celebrated and effective jazz voices of the period. Rather, there is a propensity to place most emphasis on where success occurs not necessarily how success comes to fruition. Thus, Whaley, Hodges, and Carney are often seen as New York based as opposed to Boston-born and Boston trained.

¹⁰⁹³ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music: Harvard Depository. Call # Mus 3. 40. No Author Attributed, 'New York Jazz'. *Cadence: The American Review of Jazz and Blues*, Volume 13, Issues 7-12. 29.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife, 1937-1962* (Boston: Troy Street Publishing, 2012), Introduction.

The impact of this is ultimately the paradoxical silencing of Boston's jazz voices by proxy. In this respect, the failure to acknowledge the developmental processes that gave rise to the unique sounds and styles propagated by players such as the aforementioned equated to a refusal to acknowledge the Boston influence and as a by-product, the Boston voice. This notion is further supported by the rise of Duke Ellington as case-in-point. Ellington, who is without question a jazz icon synonymous with New York, can be viewed as an apt prism through which to view the lack of recognition attributed to the role Boston and Greater Boston played in nurturing the jazz idiom and its unique voice during the 1920s. Rarely acknowledged but significant, in the years before Ellington established himself in New York, Boston and its neighbouring towns served as a training ground upon which he cultivated the unique sound that became his trademark.

Chapter 6: Duke' Ellington and the Boston connection: establishing a new voice

1. Duke Ellington: 1899 – 1923, a short history

Edward Kennedy Ellington was born on April 29, 1899 in Washington, D.C., to James Edward and Daisy Ellington. His upbringing, principally in Washington D.C., can be categorised as cultured, religious, and aspirationally middle-class. His father, a Methodist, made blueprints for the U.S. Navy and served as a White House butler, notably during the Warren G. Harding GOP Administration.¹⁰⁹⁵ His mother, a Baptist, hailed from a respected Washington family: her paternal grandfather was a white senator from Virginia, and her father was a police officer.¹⁰⁹⁶ As parents, James and Daisy set a dignified tone for the family to follow, living and raising their children (Ruth Ellington was born in August of 1916) by the ideal of Victorian gentility.¹⁰⁹⁷ The Ellingtons believed that they were a part of the black upper-crust; however, the standards to which they lived were more reflective of a desire to assert dignity and project pride than they were a true reflection of the family's actual economic and social position; their grandson, Mercer Ellington, described them as 'menials'.¹⁰⁹⁸

The pride that James and Daisy clung to nonetheless communicated itself in the traditions of art and music, and as Mercer notes they consistently stressed to Edward James the necessity to 'do something different—something that identifies you as an individual'.¹⁰⁹⁹ It is not surprising, then, that as parents the Ellingtons purposefully fostered the idea that their son was special into his consciousness when he was young. Given the fact that he grew up as a protected, well-loved child in an orderly household where decorous behaviour was the norm, Edward James naturally developed a certain etiquette that often set him aside. Regardless of how unrealistic, the belief in his own high-estate during his early years contributed to his

¹⁰⁹⁵ John Edward Hasse, *Beyond Category: The Life and Genius of Duke Ellington* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 23.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Mark Tucker, *Ellington: The Early Years* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 19.

¹⁰⁹⁷ George Elliott Clarke, *Fire on the Water: Early and modern writers, 1785-1935* (Nova Scotia: Pottersfield Press, 1991), 17.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Mercer Ellington in Harvey G. Cohen, *Duke Ellington's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010), 14.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Harvey G. Cohen, *Duke Ellington's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010), 14.

confidence, grace, good manners, regal air and sartorial splendour in later life. At the age of fourteen, these characteristics, already at that time in development, earned him the now widely known sobriquet ‘Duke’, given to him by his equally brazen and self-confident high school friend, Edgar McEntree.¹¹⁰⁰

With his newly acquired title, during the summer of 1914, Duke Ellington began working in Washington’s Poodle Dog Cafe after school as a soda fountain ‘jerk’.¹¹⁰¹ It was here that his forays into musical composition began; inspired by the music he heard in Washington’s clubs and performance halls, including that of James P. Johnson, and as a loose homage to his position at the cafe, he penned his first song, aptly titled, ‘Soda Fountain Rag’, which showcased excellent stride piano skills.¹¹⁰² After moving on from the Poodle Dog Cafe, Ellington dropped out of school to pursue music, playing in jazz bands by night and supplementing his income painting signs during the day, including those for his own musical engagements.¹¹⁰³ In addition, he served as a U.S. Navy and State Department messenger during World War I; and after the war, influenced by the style of earlier jazz artist Doc Perry, he formed his first band, ‘Duke’s Serenaders’.¹¹⁰⁴ Notably, on July 2 of 1918, he married his high school sweetheart, Edna Thompson, and nine months later, their only child, Mercer Kennedy Ellington, was born.¹¹⁰⁵

For much of the next four years Ellington became integrated, as a pianist and a leader of pickup bands (collectives that played at various dances and social functions), into Washington’s socially- and culturally-thriving Negro community.¹¹⁰⁶ During this time, the city

¹¹⁰⁰ Emmanuel Sampath Nelson, *African American Autobiographers: A Sourcebook* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 128.

¹¹⁰¹ Henry Moscow, *The Street Book: An Encyclopedia of Manhattan’s Street Names and Their Origins* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 45 *Note: ‘A soda jerk (or soda jerker) is a person — typically a youth — who operates the soda fountain in a drugstore, often for the purpose of preparing and serving flavoured soda water or an ice cream soda.’

¹¹⁰² Peter Lavezzoli, *The King of All, Sir Duke: Ellington and the Artistic Revolution* (London: A&C Black, 2001), 16.

¹¹⁰³ James Lincoln Collier, *Duke Ellington* (London: Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School Pub., 1993), 29.

¹¹⁰⁴ Leslie Alexander, *Encyclopedia of African American History* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 190.

¹¹⁰⁵ Matthew Whitaker Ph.D., *Icons of Black America: Breaking Barriers and Crossing Boundaries [3 volumes]: Breaking Barriers and Crossing Boundaries* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 262.

¹¹⁰⁶ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 356.

was a prosperous outlet for many black performers on the Chitlin' Circuit, a network of black-owned and black-managed venues where black acts were well received.¹¹⁰⁷ However, as the Harlem Renaissance moved into full swing, the appeal of New York, and especially the opportunity to play with clarinetist, Wilbur Sweatman's vaudeville act at the city's Lafayette Theatre, compelled Duke to swap the capital for New York.¹¹⁰⁸ While the move proved somewhat problematic to begin with—gigs were scarce—ultimately New York and its vibrant cultural climate would prove vital in the development and career of Duke Ellington.

However, insofar as his relocation to New York in 1923 is often noted as the significant moment in his early career development, for much of the decade thereafter Boston was also an integral and largely unsung factor in the evolution of Duke from an aspirational pianist to a performer of a high grade, profitable form of black entertainment. In this respect, Duke's eventual box-office appeal, which was in principle, underpinned by a moving, spirited, and sophisticated approach to composition, was without question, fashioned and refined during the years 1923 to 1927 and in part in many of the clubs, theatres, and ballrooms of Boston, Massachusetts and the states of New England. Beginning under the initial stewardship of Charlie Shribman, Ellington over time forged a connection with the city of Boston that gave rise to numerous accomplishments, honours, and of course, provided him with arguably two of the finest sidemen—Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney—in the entire history of jazz.

¹¹⁰⁷ Harvard University Library. Harvard Depository. Call # GV1586.6. C66. 2005. Ninotchka Bennahum, Tresa Randall, Tamara Brown, *Dance & community, Congress on Research in Dance, Spring 2005 conference, Florida State University, Tallahassee Florida - Lingering Lights from America's Black Broadway: Negro Renaissance to the Black Arts Movement, African American Concept Theatrical Dance in Washington D.C.* (Philadelphia: The Print Center, Inc., 2005), 20.

¹¹⁰⁸ Edward Green, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Duke Ellington* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 26.

2. Duke Ellington in Transit

Much of Duke Ellington's musical career was spent in transit, travelling across America with his orchestra from one concert hall to the next; as Robert Bingham notes, he led a frenetic life without roots in any town.¹¹⁰⁹ As he took his music from state to state - Washington to Louisiana to New York and on to New England – living out of a suitcase became a standard of life, and so too did composing aboard trains, planes, and automobiles. Ellington's career as such has been defined by the connections and strong bonds he forged with an array of particularly places. These connections, to a certain extent, have been reinforced in the materiality of bronze, steel, and brick. In his home city of Washington DC, a 20-foot tall, 10,000lb statue of him stands on the aptly named Ellington plaza that fronts the restored Howard Theatre.¹¹¹⁰ Similarly, in New York, there is Duke Ellington Circle, a traffic circle located at the Northeast corner of Central Park at the foot of Fifth Avenue and of 110th Street, Manhattan.¹¹¹¹ While Ellington has been dead for almost forty years, these memorial markers remain as fixed points of his legacy as a symbol of black advancement, stabilising the physical and the cognitive landscape in the process.

¹¹⁰⁹ Robert Bingham Downs, John Theodore Flanagan, Harold William Scott, *More memorable Americans, 1750-1950* (Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 1985), 129.

¹¹¹⁰ Maggie Fazeli Fard, 'Duke Ellington statue installed in Northwest D.C.' *The Washington Post*. Published: March 29, 2012. Available: https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-buzz/post/duke-ellington-statue-installed-in-northwest-dc/2012/03/29/gIQAf5J1iS_blog.html. Accessed: June 13, 2015.

¹¹¹¹ Boston Public Library. Central Microtext. Call # AN2.N7.N56. Rick Lyman, 'After an 18-Year Campaign, An Ellington Memorial Rises'. *The New York Times*. Published: July 1, 1997. 5.



Figure 6.1: A twenty-foot, stainless steel statue of Duke Ellington is set in place at Ellington Plaza in Northwest D.C. The statue, titled “Encore,” was created by sculptor Zachary Oxman, a D.C. native.¹¹¹²

However, while these markers contribute to the broader construct of an essential America, their motionless forms are incongruous with the transitional nature, both artistically and geographically of Ellington’s music. In jazz, he composed and championed an art form that, by definition, existed and continues to exist in a continuous state of flux. From ragtime to Bebop to free jazz and beyond, essential to the music and its many precursors is the notion of change. Ellington, in compositional and legacy form from the 1920s to the midpoint of the 1970s defined many of the elements, or at the least assisted in establishing them, which set new precedents for the music. Significantly, in the context of the Jazz Age itself, he developed and where necessary appropriated elements such as harmonic motifs, sharp and impudent interjections, broken rhythms, punctuated riffs, runs, breaks, and distortions. More importantly, he also spoke for a national black community, which was at the time itself in a state of political, social, and cultural transition.

¹¹¹² Maggie Fazeli Fard, ‘Duke Ellington statue installed in Northwest D.C.’ *The Washington Post*. Published: March 29, 2012. Available: https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-buzz/post/duke-ellington-statue-installed-in-northwest-dc/2012/03/29/gIQAf5J1iS_blog.html. Accessed: June 13, 2015.

In this respect, Ellington did not openly advocate black equality in a defined manner of overt racial protest like so many of his contemporaries. Rather, his devotion to his race and his purpose to document its accomplishments and character infused large portions of his work. Insofar as Ellington's success is often measured in terms of economic value and critical acclaim, debatably his finest achievement was his unwavering ability to incorporate the history, spirit, and problems of being black in America into his work without it devolving into polemic. As Ellington alluded to in the 1920s, being viewed as a 'black entertainer' during the Jazz Age often meant that one's work was easier to dismiss.¹¹¹³ Ellington found, especially in the early years of his career, that lexicological critics and wide-ranging commentators would repeatedly hone in on his use and refashioning of jazz standards such as improvisation, contemporary dance rhythms, and blues tonalities as evidence of non-seriousness.¹¹¹⁴ He noted:

I guess serious is a confusing word...We take our American music seriously. If serious means European music, I'm not interested in that. Some people mix up the words serious and classical. They're a lot different. Classical music is supposed to be 200 years old. There is no such thing as modern classical music. There is great, serious music. That is all.¹¹¹⁵

Ellington counteracted the kinds of flippancy levelled at his elemental frameworks by establishing himself, from the mid-twenties onwards, as a great artist as opposed to just a black artist. Impressively, he achieved this feat while staying true to both his musical vision and ideals. As Gary Giddins notes, like Mozart, Ellington 'wrote music specifically designed for dance and concert and, again like Mozart, fudged the distinction between the two by the originality and consistency of his vision.¹¹¹⁶ It was this commitment to excellence and originality that has helped to propel jazz to the status of America's 'classical music' in the contemporary era. An era in which the 'guardians of jazz' have become just as determined to protect the music from foreign influences as the high-art culturists of Boston – the Brahmins

¹¹¹³ Duke Ellington in Harvey G. Cohen, *Duke Ellington's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010), 3.

¹¹¹⁴ Bill Krichner, *The Oxford Companion to Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 142.

¹¹¹⁵ Mark Tucker, *Duke Ellington, The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 253.

¹¹¹⁶ Gary Giddins, *Visions of Jazz: The First Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103.

- were to defend the sanctity of concert and classical (serious) music around the turn of the twentieth century.¹¹¹⁷

The city of Boston does not possess any tangible markers or physical homages to Ellington, and there is little of value textually to indicate the role the city played in the evolution of his musical voice. This is despite tours spanning New England from 1923 to 1927, and the fact that from 1926 onwards, Ellington's band comprised at least one musician from Boston. During the second half of the twenties, Harry Carney (from 1926) and Johnny Hodges (from 1928) were both ever-presents. While in the 1950s, Paul Gonsalves' arrival provided Ellington with his strongest tenor (saxophone) soloist of the post-Ben Webster decades.¹¹¹⁸ Loyal until the last, all three died as fully fledged members of the Ellington Orchestra.¹¹¹⁹ As a legacy, especially in the case of Carney and Hodges, these musicians created a completely original sound language, which they spoke right at the heart of Duke Ellington's music for years.¹¹²⁰

Much of the heady praise Ellington received from audiences, critics, and academics in Boston occurred during the Hodges and Carney era, beginning circa 1926. His association with the city, however, was underway in 1924. At this time, touring was the enemy of any road band. Often jazz collectives would be forced to cover inordinate distances up to 300 miles by bus from one night to the next. The more compact geography of New England's coastline and the array of musical venues dotted along it, heading towards and eventually into Boston, made the route particularly appealing to aspiring players.¹¹²¹ This was exploited by local impresario,

¹¹¹⁷ Mark Rennella, *The Boston Cosmopolitans: International Travel and American Arts and Letters* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 60.

¹¹¹⁸ Paul Gonsalves had served a four year term as Count Basie's main tenor man and one year with Dizzie Gillespie before he teamed up with Ellington. By 1950, he was a seasoned professional and an accomplished sideman. David Bardbury, *Duke Ellington* (London: Haus Publishing, 2005), 82.

¹¹¹⁹ Gonsalves passed on May 15, 1974. Somewhat fittingly, nine days after, on the day of Gonsalves' funeral, Duke Ellington, weeks after his seventy-fifth birthday, lost his battle with cancer. And Inside five months, Carney was gone, too. Scott Yanow, *Jazz: A Regional Exploration* (New York: Greenwood Publishing, 2005), 56.

¹¹²⁰ Matt Lavelle, *New York City Subway Drama, And Beyond* (New York: iUniverse, 2001), 139.

¹¹²¹ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles: Faces, Places, and Nightlife, 1937-1962* (Boston: Troy Street Publishing, 2012), 3-4.

Charlie Shribman, who ‘controlled almost all of the ballrooms in New England’, as well as handling many bookings in the city from the early twenties onwards.¹¹²²

Among the many great American jazz players to master New York via Boston, abetted by Shribman, were: Glen Miller, Artie Shaw, Claude Thornhill, Sidney Bechet, Max Kaminsky, Bix Beiderbecke, Jean Godlkette, and of course, Duke Ellington.¹¹²³ From 1924 to 1927, Ellington carried out long summer residencies along the New England coast and around Boston that gave his band its first exposure outside of New York.¹¹²⁴ His commitment to this circuit also resulted in their first out-of-town reviews, one of which credited Ellington with ‘setting New England dance crazy’.¹¹²⁵ These tours proved successful, partly due to Charlie Shribman, who admired the talent of Ellington’s band and thus promoted them vigorously. Undoubtedly, Shribman was a kingmaker in the band business, owning ballrooms, financing bands and using radio and publicity as well as anyone in the business.¹¹²⁶ Musicians follow the work, and Shribman had the work. His circuit made the dance-crazy northeast the big band capital of the country in the 1920s and 1930s. As Ellington noted:

There wouldn’t be a band if it wasn’t for Charlie Shribman. He kept the whole racket going and a lot of guys would be starving if he hadn’t helped them.¹¹²⁷

Back in the mid-1920s, when Ellington was just beginning to gain a foothold in the New York nightclub world, he would spend the summer months playing a circuit of theatres, dance halls, and pavilions throughout Greater Boston. According to Mark Tucker’s *Early Ellington*, his itinerary for 1926 included 24 appearances in the area between July 12 and August 13, during which time, Harry Carney joined the band.¹¹²⁸ The following summer, he

¹¹²² George Wein, Nate Chinen, *Myself Among Others: A Life in Music* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 2009), 52.

¹¹²³ No Author Attributed, ‘Charlie Shribamn’. *Record Research*, Issues 101-136. 1969. Page: 43. Available – Harvard Key (Proquest): <https://www.pin1.harvard.edu/cas>. Accessed: September 1, 2015.

¹¹²⁴ A. H. Lawrence, *Duke Ellington and his World* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 31.

¹¹²⁵ Edward Kennedy Ellington, *Music is my Mistress* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 44.

¹¹²⁶ Randall Sandke, *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 192.

¹¹²⁷ Chet Williamson, *Jazz Rifting on a Lost Worcester: ‘Bal-a-l’Air and Sun Valley’*. Published: June 10, 2013. Available: <http://jazzriffing.blogspot.co.uk/2013/06/bal-lair-and-sun-valley.html>. Accessed: August 14, 2015.

¹¹²⁸ John Arthur Garraty, Mark Christopher Carnes, American Council of Learned Societies, *American national biography, Volume 4* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 420.

played 33 engagements around the Hub, all booked by Shribman, including nine performances at the Charlehurst Ballroom in Salem Willows,¹¹²⁹ the town's summer recreation area located at the end of Salem Neck, a point of land that juts into the harbour, with Beverly to the north and Marblehead to the south.¹¹³⁰

It is unclear how Ellington and his band, then titled the Washingtonians, first came to the attention of Shribman, who principally operated out of Salem but ran a chain of ballrooms across New England. Booking records indicate that the band initially appeared on a Shribman bill on Easter Monday of 1924 at a dance in Salem for the Massachusetts Young Men's Christian Temperance Society.¹¹³¹ If indeed it was the first Ellington show under Shribman, it can be considered important because it marked a significant shift in the career trajectory of Ellington. What is more interesting, however, is that this show marks a moment during the Jazz Age when the supposed devil's music and the notion of temperance and associated purity were brought together in one arena in an official and, what appears to be, an accepted capacity.

While Salem, much like Boston, had an aura of 'quiet and proper' and was thus similarly not the kind of place that would openly take to the fast-paced and often outlandish nature of jazz music, especially performed by a group of musicians from New York, Ellington and company were a success there. This may have derived from the fact that the racial makeup in Salem was quite different to nearby Boston: there were no black residents and thus perhaps no great sense of hostility towards the race, brought about by labour struggles, cultural differences, and so on.¹¹³² In reality, Salem was a world away from the complex social dynamics of Boston. It was untouched by the furore of the Red Scare, had little to no concept of cultural elitism, and was largely unaffected by social prejudices ubiquitous in Boston, which had been further exacerbated by prohibition and the presence of the Watch and Ward Society.

¹¹²⁹ Klaus Stratemann, Duke Ellington, *Day by Day and Film by Film* (Copenhagen: Jazz Media, 1992), 51.

¹¹³⁰ Mark Tucker, *Ellington: The Early Years* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 186.

¹¹³¹ A. H. Lawrence, *Duke Ellington and His World* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 45.

¹¹³² No Author Attributed, 'Saluting Duke Ellington'. *Record Reserach*, Issues 121 - 130. 1973. 16.

In fact, the lack of blacks in the area probably made Ellington something of an oddity,¹¹³³ which supports the claim, made by Mark Tucker, that the band was largely accepted. Residing at the New Brunswick Hotel, when not in transition, the musicians enjoyed the ‘fresh salt air, boat rides on the harbour, delicious fish dinners, and good natured fun’.¹¹³⁴ Ellington even became friendly with a police lieutenant, who later became Salem’s mayor.¹¹³⁵ At a time when Ellington and company, as Mark Tucker notes, were in danger of ‘drifting around New York from one short engagement to the next’,¹¹³⁶ Boston provided them with a structured touring circuit and the support, principally the financial backing of Charlie Shribman to operate on a consistent basis.¹¹³⁷ In his autobiography, *Music Is My Mistress*, Ellington recalled Shribman as a man who ‘nursed’ bands, ‘would send for them and keep them working...Yet (he) never owned a piece of any band or anybody remarking,

...I cannot imagine what would have happened to the big bands if it had not been for Charlie Shribman.¹¹³⁸

It was Shribman’s support and the Greater Boston touring circuit which led to the earliest notable Ellington releases. In November 1924, he made his publishing and recording debut with ‘Choo Choo (I Got to Hurry Home)’ - trains had been a common theme in songs since the 1840s - released on the Blu-Disc label.¹¹³⁹ This composition was, in the simplest terms, a concept piece on which Charlie Irvis’s trombone revs up the engines and Otto Hardwick lets his frenetic alto saxophone create a jaunty, almost nervous quality that conjures images of rail travel.¹¹⁴⁰ A year later, Ellington contributed two more songs - ‘Love Is a Wish for You’ and ‘Skeedely-Um-Bum’ - to *Chocolate Kiddies*, an all-black revue that introduced European audiences to black American styles and performers.¹¹⁴¹

¹¹³³ Mercer Ellington, *Duke Ellington in Person: An Intimate Memoir* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 1979), 18.

¹¹³⁴ Mark Tucker, *Ellington: The Early Years* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 186.

¹¹³⁵ Barry Ulanov, *Duke Ellington* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 1975), 52.

¹¹³⁶ Mark Tucker, *Ellington: The Early Years* (Illinois: University of Illinois, 1995), 192.

¹¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹³⁸ Duke Ellington, *Music is my Mistress* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 99.

¹¹³⁹ Duke Ellington, Bob Schafer, Dave Ringle, ‘Choo Choo (I Got To Hurry Home)’. Conductor: Rosario Bourbon. Victor 19516. 10" Shellac. 1924.

¹¹⁴⁰ Mark Tucker, *Ellington: The Early Years* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 142-143.

¹¹⁴¹ John Franceschina, *Duke Ellington's Music for the Theatre* (North Carolina: McFarland: 2001), 14.

On the back of these releases, circa June 16 to 26,¹¹⁴² Ellington and his band pitted their skills at Nuttings-on-the-Charles in Waltham, Massachusetts in a ‘battle-of-the-bands’. On this occasion, rather than playing alongside Mal Hallett, they faced-off against him. On this occasion, Mal’s band boasted an array of excellent side players, including none other than Boston-based saxophone legend, Nuncio ‘Toots’ Mondello.¹¹⁴³ By this time, Mal and company had built a sound that was underpinned by big, fat arrangements of dance music. On this sound, he had developed a reputation as a musician who consistently blew New York bands right out over the Charles River.¹¹⁴⁴ This, of course, forced the Ellington orchestra to raise their game and work towards a more polished and consistently brilliant synthesis.¹¹⁴⁵

The willingness of Shribman to invest in and promote the Ellington repertoire led to several opportunities to perform alongside leading Bostonian jazz players such as Mal Hallett and resident acts such as Speed Young, Frank Ward’s Boston Orchestra,¹¹⁴⁶ and the Crescent Gardens Orchestra.¹¹⁴⁷ Starting in June 1927, the band embarked on a 27-date tour of New England that saw them appear at venues across the region, including two shows in Boston.¹¹⁴⁸ While Ellington’s appeal was growing across New England during this time, the general appeal of jazz in Boston can be seen to have limited the opportunities there. In a symbolic sense, the success he achieved in Greater Boston towns, such as Cambridge, and further afield in Waltham and Salem, supports the notion of a music, quite literally, developing on the fringes (or rather the margins).

¹¹⁴² There is some confusion as to on what date this show occurred. This is significant because it marks the first time that Caney appeared with Ellington as an official member of the Orchestra. Sources such as Troy Street suggest it happened on June 20, 1927. Carney himself alleges June 16. However, the schedules for the period have the date as June 26.

¹¹⁴³ Jon C. Mitchell, *A Comprehensive Biography of Composer Gustav Holst, with Correspondence and Diary Excerpts: Including His American Years* (New York: E. Mellen Press, 2001), 545.

¹¹⁴⁴ Troy Street Publishing. Richard Vacca: On June 20, 1927, ‘Harry Carney joins Duke’s Band’. Published: June 20, 2013. Available: <http://troystreet.com/tspots/2013/06/20/on-june-20-1927-harry-carney-joins-dukes-band>. Accessed: June 21, 2013.

¹¹⁴⁵ A. H. Lawrence, *Duke Ellington and His World* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 76.

¹¹⁴⁶ Dick Hill, Sylvester Ahola, *The Gloucester Gabriel* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 7.

¹¹⁴⁷ Duke Ellington, *Music is my Mistress* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 99.

¹¹⁴⁸ Troy Street Publishing. Richard Vacca: On June 20, 1927, ‘Harry Carney joins Duke’s Band’. Published: June 20, 2013. Available: <http://troystreet.com/tspots/2013/06/20/on-june-20-1927-harry-carney-joins-dukes-band>. Accessed: June 21, 2013.

3. Duke Ellington and Voice: Boston talking, from the margins

Duke Ellington was, arguably, America's greatest jazz composer. His music, in originality and scope, has no equal in jazz.¹¹⁴⁹ While in a broader respect few artists of any genre have produced a catalogue of work as extensive and consistently brilliant, his music during the Jazz Age was, among many things, evolutionary. While in elemental form it often adhered to many of the agreed-upon jazz standards, in ambition, especially by 1929, it was by far the most exigent form of the music in America, serving as the foundations for decades of musical and personal development. One need only reflect on Ellington's catalogue to recognise that the man set precedents and broke new ground and then, seemingly for the sake of it, appropriated and at times completely reworked many of his own jazz standards and thereafter performed these new takes with such regularity that they too became standards.

Thus, it seems appropriate that of all the work that exists in the pantheon of American jazz history, Duke Ellington is far-and-away the most written about artist. Much of the work documents a career of remarkable creative and popular staying power; a career richly integrated with American history during the transformative years of the twentieth century. Duke Ellington was, among many things, a composer, an arranger, a pianist, a bandleader, an entertainer, and an entrepreneur. But he was also an important figure for black advancement and a significant mouthpiece for blacks across America. Emerging in the late 1910s, during a period of harsh Jim Crow vilification on the streets and in the media, Ellington's musical prowess steadily carried him to a position of high-regard in American cultural circles, where he established himself as a respected, often by whites just as much as blacks, major artistic figure.¹¹⁵⁰

In the context of the Jazz Age itself, Ellington has been described as a developing 'cultural hero'; a figure who, while setting the groundwork for the skilful manipulation of the pragmatic realities he faced during the era, simultaneously mediated public tensions that

¹¹⁴⁹ Gary Giddins, *Visions of Jazz: The First Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 102.

¹¹⁵⁰ Harvey G. Cohen, *Duke Ellington's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 3.

existed between, amongst many things, ‘popular and serious American art, intellectual and popular culture, creativity and conformity, democracy and communism’ and of course, blacks and whites.¹¹⁵¹ But insofar as Ellington the individual served as a totem for changes taking place at the time in larger society, his music was not composed in the solitude of his own inspiration. Rather, he incorporated the skill-sets of a diverse and at times unparalleled collection of musicians, who took on the role of a developing orchestra. As its focal point (i.e., its composer and conductor), Ellington viewed the orchestra as one large instrument stretched to the utmost lengths of its capabilities.¹¹⁵²

Ellington repeatedly called on the creative and often original nuances of his backing band to embellish his furtive musical politicisations and reactions to white dominance. As Nathaniel Mackey asserts, the improvisatory privileging of the verb in black work (such as Ellington’s) connects with the more general linguistic situation ‘among a people whose ability to act is curtailed by racist constraints’.¹¹⁵³ In this sense, black artists could resist erasure, creative containment, and commodification by changing the ‘noun to the verb’.¹¹⁵⁴ Here Mackey makes reference to the work of Amiri Baraka, who focused on white appropriations of black music, principally the development of big-band jazz in the twenties and thirties.¹¹⁵⁵ This focus pitted the original compositional styling of Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, and Jimmie Lunceford against the commoditised imitations of white musicians such as Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, and Benny Goodman.¹¹⁵⁶

In an effort to counteract ongoing efforts of whites to take and thereafter trade on the ideas and expressions of blacks, Ellington’s work from 1927 onwards can be seen to have been channelled through a consistent portal of variance, inventiveness, and alternatives to musical

¹¹⁵¹ Harvey G. Cohen, *Duke Ellington's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 2.

¹¹⁵² Gary Giddins, *Visions of Jazz: The First Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103.

¹¹⁵³ Evie Shockley, *Renegade Poetics: Black Aesthetics and Formal Innovation in African American Poetry* (Iowa: University of Iowa, 2011), 9.

¹¹⁵⁴ ‘The privileging of the verb, the movement from noun to verb, linguistically accentuates action among a people whose ability to act is curtailed by racist constraints.’ Robert G. O’Meally, *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture* (New York: Columbia University, 1998), 515.

¹¹⁵⁵ Amiri Baraka, *1963: Jazz and the White Critic* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1968).

¹¹⁵⁶ Ajay Heble, Rebecca Caines, *The Improvisation Studies Reader: Spontaneous Acts* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 244.

norms in an effort to resist notions of othering found in black culture.¹¹⁵⁷ In this sense, Ellington can be considered 'the truest and most complete innovator' of the era; for he so thoroughly remade the fundamentals of jazz to the point that they took on new life.¹¹⁵⁸ By persistently moving the boundaries of creativity for his work, Ellington repeatedly set new precedents for black American music. When those precedents became subject to white mimicry and thus standardisation, he started all over again and redefined the paradigms by utilising the voices of his orchestra.

Through these voices, Ellington vicariously was able to orate the value and power of black creativity and resourcefulness. With work, such as *the Mooche*¹¹⁵⁹ and *Black & Tan Fantasy*¹¹⁶⁰ he ensured that the philosophy of black music was viewed as a credible art form of cultural intent – one that emerged out of the sociological disposition of blacks in America. For all the innate qualities of a jazz instrument, Ellington knew better than most that once any instrument had been mastered it was the inimitable personality of sound predicated by the individual musician that gave it character and brought it to life. As such, when one breaks down the component parts of Ellington's orchestra, individual distinction is unmistakably apparent: band members felt that they were given an opportunity to express their own talents, and in turn elements of their musical voices, while playing and colouring Ellington's unique music.¹¹⁶¹

Among the many great musicians – including Cootie Williams, Bubber Miley, Joe Nanton, and Arthur Whetsol - to have played in the many evocations of the Ellington Orchestra during the Jazz Age, Bostonian, Harry Carney and from neighbouring Cambridge, Johnny Hodges were unmistakeably essential players.¹¹⁶² Along with Duke's piano and Bubber

¹¹⁵⁷ Zora Neale Hurston in Ajay Heble, Rebecca Caines, *The Improvisation Studies Reader: Spontaneous Acts* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 254.

¹¹⁵⁸ Mark Tucker, Duke Ellington, *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 442.

¹¹⁵⁹ Duke Ellington And His Orchestra – *The Mooche / Sweet Chariot*. Shellac, 10", 78 RPM. Odeon-Swing-Music-Series – A 2408. 1927.

¹¹⁶⁰ Duke Ellington and his Washingtonians, *Black and Tan Fantasy*. 78RPM Recording. Victor, USA: 21137. 1927.

¹¹⁶¹ William Ludwig in Karl Koenig, *Jazz in Print 1859-1929* (New York: Pendragon Press, 2002), 186.

¹¹⁶² Dick M. Bakker, *Duke Ellington on Microgroove, Volume 1* (London: Micrography, 1977), 14-16.

Miley's plunger-muted brass,¹¹⁶³ the 'flowing, sensuous alto-saxophone of Hodges, and the full-blooded baritone saxophone of Carney proved quintessential elements of the Ellington sound that had at their core a sense of heritage.¹¹⁶⁴ As young, aspirational blacks in Boston, Carney and Hodges grew up in the shadows of important black Bostonians before them, including abolitionists, academics, and members of their respective communities who had contributed to campaigns of resistance.¹¹⁶⁵

This heritage instilled in both a sense of identity, which was in time developed, with the help of the great Sidney Bechet,¹¹⁶⁶ into a portmanteau of musical qualities that Ellington equated to a unique and effective form of cultural language. Ellington once remarked that Hodges' effortless style was one of a kind. In an interview with jazz historian, Sydney Dance, he remarked, Johnny Hodges 'says what he wants to say on the horn and that is it.' He says it in 'his' language, which is specific, and you could say that this is pure artistry'.¹¹⁶⁷ John Edward Hasse stated, 'Hodges ranks as one of the very best alto saxophonists in jazz, and as one of the most unmistakable and gorgeous 'voices' of the 20th century'.¹¹⁶⁸

Similarly, Carney's baritone solo work had the capacity to conjure emotional connections, and often was utilised as a vehicle for the projection of despair. As Kent Smith notes, Carney 'had such a rich tone that he could play notes in the range of a tenor, and Duke would give him some of the high parts. If another baritone saxophonist tried it, it wouldn't sound right because he wasn't Harry Carney'.¹¹⁶⁹ His abilities were seamlessly married with the sensuality of Johnny Hodges and the sweet melody of Otto Hardwick, which in turn

¹¹⁶³ Anthony Appiah, Henry Louis Gates (Jr.), *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 11.

¹¹⁶⁴ Mark Tucker., *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 472

¹¹⁶⁵ For example, it was in Boston that Crispus Attucks died for American Independence.

¹¹⁶⁶ Courtney Patterson Carney, 'JAZZ AND THE CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF AMERICA IN THE 1920s, A Dissertation', Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Department of History. B.A., Baylor University, 1996. 150. Available: http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-1110103-161818/unrestricted/Carney_dis.pdf. Accessed: June 7, 2015.

¹¹⁶⁷ Lol Henderson, Lee Stacey, *Encyclopedia of Music in the 20th Century* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 294.

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁹ Cary D. Wintz, Paul Finkelman, *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance: A-J* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2004), 501.

complemented a trumpet section that boasted the snarling plunger mute of Bubber Miley and the poignant lyricism of Arthur Whetsol. As a ten-piece, the power of Ellington's Orchestra was unprecedented, and rightly, it received consistent audience and media praise, including the title of 'the royal family of big bands'.¹¹⁷⁰

The power of this orchestra, the influence of its voice, and the nuanced contributions of Carney and Hodges to these characteristics can best be understood through the shift in Ellington's work that occurred circa 1927 to 1929. This shift, which can loosely be defined as a move into the experimental and at times the vanguard, coincided with the period when his growing regard in New York and along the East Coast was simultaneously abetted by the emergence of Network Radio broadcasting and the arrival of Ellington as a national figure. Of particular note here are four compositional recordings: *The Mooche*,¹¹⁷¹ *Creole Love Call*,¹¹⁷² *Yellow Dog Blues*¹¹⁷³ and *Tishomingo Blues*.¹¹⁷⁴ These recordings show a defined vision on the part of Ellington but also the ways in which he began to utilise the unique and elementally varied skillset of the musicians he had assembled to furtively speak his language of protest and resistance.

3.1 Creole Love Call (Instrumental) to Yellow Dog Blues

First aired in 1927 and recorded several times thereafter, notably also in 1928 (copyrighted at this time, too) alongside *The Mooche*, *Creole Love Call* marks an interesting time in Ellington's career. In one respect, the song has been cited as a focal point in what is often referred to as his zenith period. However, the song also carries a minor stigma. Its main melody, which was presented to Ellington in 1927 as an original piece by his then saxophonist, Rudy Jackson, was duly adopted by the band. However, it came to bear that the melody also

¹¹⁷⁰ No Author Attributed, 'Talent in Action: Duke Ellington: Rainbow Grill, New York'. *Billboard*. January 13, 1973. 19.

¹¹⁷¹ Duke Ellington And His Orchestra – *The Mooche / Sweet Chariot*. 78 RPM. Odeon-Swing-Music-Series – A 2408. 1927. Shellac, 10",

¹¹⁷² Duke Ellington and his Orchestra, *Creole Love Call / Black and Tan Fantasie*. Victor 21137: US. 10" Shellac.

¹¹⁷³ Duke Ellington, *Duke Ellington 1927 – 1931*. MCA Records – 34101. Vinyl LP. 1978.

¹¹⁷⁴ Duke Ellington and his Orchestra, *Creole Love Call / Black and Tan Fantasie*. Victor 21137: US. 10" Shellac.

appeared in the Joe 'King' Oliver composition *Camp Meeting Blues*, which Oliver recorded with his Creole Jazz Band in 1923. Oliver attempted to sue for payment of royalties but the lawsuit collapsed due to problems with Oliver's original paperwork. More significant here, though, is that Ellington fired Jackson over the incident, and replaced him with the ebullient clarinetist, Barney Bigard. Bigard stayed for fifteen years and it was his pirouetting against sonorous brass that provided Ellington with many climaxes to his compositions during those years.¹¹⁷⁵

Much like *East St. Louis Toodle-oo*¹¹⁷⁶ and *The Mooche*, *Creole Love Call* can be considered a musical exploration that went 'far beyond the expectations of popular taste or a more discerning hot jazz connoisseurship'.¹¹⁷⁷ Helen Oakley remarked in a 1936 *Down Beat* article, addressing readers in defence of Ellington and with reference to this particular piece:

A lot of Duke's material goes over our heads because we are not used to having to listen that carefully. When you say that they don't swing, remember that they don't play the tempos or style you are accustomed to. Try paying attention once, and remember that more styles than one can be good.¹¹⁷⁸

While the aforementioned compositions were nevertheless musically unique from everything else at the time, as a collection they shared certain similarities, notably the employment of a recapitulation to conclude; i.e., ending the songs quietly, carried by Bigard, with a short reprise of the main theme (most bands of the period ended each number with full ensemble (sometimes collectively improvised). But for their elemental and structural complexities, these songs all share a melancholic simplicity, underpinned by blues chords.¹¹⁷⁹

Moreover, on *Creole Love Call* and many of his so-called jungle era compositions, Ellington, in what may be likened to a theatrical play in compositional form, deployed his soloists, including Carney and Hodges, much like characters in a play, with their comings and

¹¹⁷⁵ Michael Stephens, *Experiencing Jazz: A Listener's Companion* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 226.

¹¹⁷⁶ Duke Ellington And His Washingtonians, *East St. Louis Toodle-O / Hop Head*. Columbia 953-D US. 10" Shellac. 1927.

¹¹⁷⁷ Helen Oakley in Paul Allen Anderson, *Deep River: Music and Memory in Harlem Renaissance Thought* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 291.

¹¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁹ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music. Holdings: 1958-1961. Mus 10. 12. v. 1. Call # 32044044304889. Buster Smith, Wilbur Ware, 'Early Duke'. *The Jazz Review*, Volume 2. Number 11. December 1929. Page 11.

goings planned and orchestrated. While the focus of *Creole Love Call* revolves around the 'tigerish snarling' of Miley's trumpet, the song's mood also calls on the sensual interchanges between the reed section as a rebuttal to Miley's trumpet. In this respect, the saxophones of Hardwick, Carney - and on post-1928 recordings, Hodges - can be heard employing the quintessential black jazz feature of call and response. While arguably here, Carney and later Hodges are somewhat overshadowed by Miley what is apparent on early recording of this composition is a sense that Carney and where applicable, Hodges were beginning to integrate into the band and more importantly they were starting to develop their unique tones and staccato – notes that are abruptly disconnected - styles further.¹¹⁸⁰

3.2. Yellow Dog Blues/Tishomingo Blues

A June 25, 1928 recording session, again for Brunswick, delivered a reworking of W. C. Handy's *Yellow Dog Blues*. While obviously not an original Ellington composition, his arrangement of the piece shows the same level of mastery that he applied to his own scores. At times, on *Yellow Dog Blues* included, Ellington comes close to creating something almost entirely new when appropriating. Also notable on this recording were the abilities of Carney and Hodges to meet his lofty expectations, while simultaneously enriching the sound palette. Here one can hear a general progression from *Creole Love Call* that highlights the way that Ellington was beginning actively to score for the band as a whole, as opposed to dictating parts to individual members or doctoring up stock arrangements. Naturally, this gave rise to a more interconnected work underpinned by a tighter chemistry.

In his efforts to achieve this, Ellington was abetted by the arrival of Johnny Hodges, whose soprano saxophone married wonderfully with the growling of Miley and, on this occasion, Nanton. As he had done on *Creole Love Call*, Ellington opened *Yellow Dog Blues* with a high reed trio that pitted Hodges' soprano saxophone against the clarinets of Bigard and Carney. Drawing on Latin rhythm to underpin Nanton's playing, of particular note here is

¹¹⁸⁰ Harvard University Library. Loeb Music. Holdings: 1958-1961. Mus 10. 12. v. 1. Call # 32044044304889. Buster Smith, Wilbur Ware, 'Early Duke'. *The Jazz Review*, Volume 2. Number 11. December 1929. Page 11.

the way that Hodges contributed a frothy solo, that in echoing the playing style of his mentor Sidney Bechet was every bit a homage to his fantastic tutelage and thus a nod to his roots in Boston. The capabilities of Hodges and Carney were so appreciated by Ellington that from 1928 onwards as Loren Schoenberg asserts, he used the term 'Boston' for solos, which is how he notated them on his scores.¹¹⁸¹

During this recording session, Ellington also put down a reworking of Spencer Williams' *Tishomingo Blues*. Again, showcasing the unison attack of Carney, Bigard, and a supremely confident Johnny Hodges, who provided the reed section with a dominant voice and a luxurious alto texture, displayed the timbre and rhythmic control of a master. From the moment Ellington's reworked eight-bar introduction mixed descending chromatic chords and sustained whole notes with Hodges' pungent fills, a new leader was emerging. That introduction, which also featured the brilliance of Carney, established the unusually rich, somewhat dark, and at times melancholic flavour of saxophone writing that became customary Ellington during the first half of the 1930s.

Of particular note here above all else, however, is the maturity and accomplishment of Hodges. Considering he was still one month shy of his twentieth birthday it is surprising to hear that there was something of a distinct wisdom in his playing that carried the same sense of pride and injustice that was empowering Ellington. As he sparred with Bigard in the songs opening, and later, after the first chorus, as he responded to one of Miley's solos with a stunning outburst of alto power, he was in those moments establishing himself as a significant black voice of the era. Soon thereafter, both Hodges and Carney would team up with Ellington to write *Cotton Club Stomp*, further indicating that the two had become not just prominent but overtly vocal in their musical expressions.

¹¹⁸¹ Loren Schoenberg, *The Radio Years 1940-45: The rehearsing Duke* (See DEMS 00/3-9/1 and 2). *The International: Duke Ellington Music Society*. 2000/4. Dec 2000 - March 2001. 13.

3.3. The Mooche

The Mooche,¹¹⁸² first recorded in 1927 (copyrighted in 1929), built on the sombre and at times weeping mood of *East St Louis Toodle-oo*, and marked the moment in Ellington's career when the quest to make 'sweet music' gave way to a new musical language, described as 'jungle music'.¹¹⁸³ While principally powered by the growling, sinewy muted horn of James 'Bubber' Miley, this sound was quintessentially moody and poignant in style and somewhat indicative of a real blues feeling. Elementally, it pooled the audacious use of multiple themes, key changes, and richly coloured textural effects and harmonies to conjure the shadowy, the wry, the salacious, and more importantly, the personal. In its daring freshness, it offered a counter to the gracefulness of Paul Whiteman's Orchestra, which often fell back on a process of transforming American popular music into a brightly contemporaneous model.

On *The Mooche*, Ellington tapped into something deeper and altogether more ominous. In order to achieve this, he called on the shades and tones of members of his orchestra, including Carney and Hodges, who were still somewhat in the infancy of their tenure. On the October 17, 1928 Warner-Brunswick Ltd recording,¹¹⁸⁴ Carney (clarinet, alto, and baritone sax), and Johnny Hodges (clarinet, soprano, and alto sax) assisted the focal points of Ellington's and Miley's playing in bringing to the attention of white New York the exotic, dangerous, and totally unfamiliar landscapes of a black world far off in a different continent. For *The Mooche*, with its eerily wailing clarinets, snarling brass, and primitive sounding temple blocks, transported its audiences, often exclusively white, into the heart of an imaginary Africa, one that when performed live with improvisational free-reign acted as a cultural conduit.

¹¹⁸² Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra, *The Mooche*. Shellac, 10", 78 RPM. Warner-Brunswick Ltd. 1235-A. 1928.

¹¹⁸³ Eric S Strother., 'The Development Of Duke Ellington's Compositional Style: A Comparative Analysis of Three Selected Works', (2001). University of Kentucky Master's Theses. Paper 381. Available: http://uknowledge.uky.edu/gradschool_theses/381. Accessed: June 08, 2015.

¹¹⁸⁴ Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra, *The Mooche*. Shellac, 10", 78 RPM. Warner-Brunswick Ltd. 1235-A. 1928.

This conduit often incorporated spontaneous sounds, delivered by anyone in the orchestra willing to step up, that often expressed the tortures, shrieks, and agonies of being black in America. In this respect, *The Mooche* served a particularly important purpose. During a time when white America was, in part, systematically trying to dehumanise blacks in lynch law segregation, *The Mooche*, with its jungle themes, marks a deliberate attempt on the part of Ellington to project the musical traditions and the cultural heritage of black Africa that had so inspired him. As Florence Zusner in the *New York Evening Graphic* noted, Ellington was ‘taking the Negro from Egypt, going with him to savage Africa, and from there to the sorrow and slavery of Dixie, and finally ‘home to Harlem’.¹¹⁸⁵ This journey was the foundation for future forays into conceptual compositions, such as 1940’s masterpiece, *Ko-Ko*,¹¹⁸⁶ in which jungle conventions, powered by the saxophones of Carney, Hodges, and by then also Otto Hardwick, depict the dancing of African slaves in New Orleans’s Place Congo.¹¹⁸⁷

While the roles of Carney and Hodges during this recording were somewhat low-key when compared to what followed in the years thereafter – the two would lead ‘hundreds’¹¹⁸⁸ of compositions, including *Prelude to a Kiss* and *In a Mellotone* - it is evident here that the strength of Ellington’s orchestra was clearly wealthier for their presence. Behind the interchanging and musical sparring of Miley and Duke up front lay the developing distinction of a unique reed section. In jazz, most reed sections are voiced with alto on top and baritone on the bottom, but notably at this time, and on many occasions in the future, Carney’s baritone sax voice reigned prominent. Naturally, this equated to a warmer, at times darker, and altogether denser soundscape, which over time became the signature of Ellington’s compositional and performing style.

¹¹⁸⁵ Florence Zusner in Mark R. Tucker, ed., *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 45.

¹¹⁸⁶ Duke Ellington, *Koko*. Dreyfus Jazz – FDM 36717-2. Compilation, Remastered. 2000. Track 2. CD.

¹¹⁸⁷ The inspiration for *KoKo* appears to stem from the 1902 arrival in New Orleans of voodoo practitioner, Dr Koko. Dr. Koko claimed to come from the Congo, and boasted that he had discovered the seal of Solomon - the signet ring attributed to King Solomon in medieval Jewish tradition - on the shores of Syria. Joseph E. Holloway, *Africanisms in American Culture* (Indiana University Press, 2005), 139.

¹¹⁸⁸ Lol Henderson, Lee Stacey, *Encyclopedia of Music in the 20th Century* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 294.

Duke Ellington remarked at the height of his popularity that ‘jazz is like the automobile and airplane. It is modern and it is American’.¹¹⁸⁹ He also stated around the same time that ‘all music critics think jazz musicians are trying to get into the symphonic field’, but argued that ninety percent, himself included, were not interested in symphony techniques at all. However, by the time Duke Ellington received the Esquire gold medal award from Arthur Fielder of the Boston Pops in 1947, he had all but elevated black jazz to the plateau of high art in America. No longer was jazz simply a music in the margins - a sound emanating from bordellos and gambling dens – it was now billed at Symphony Hall and appreciated by vast white audiences and black alike.

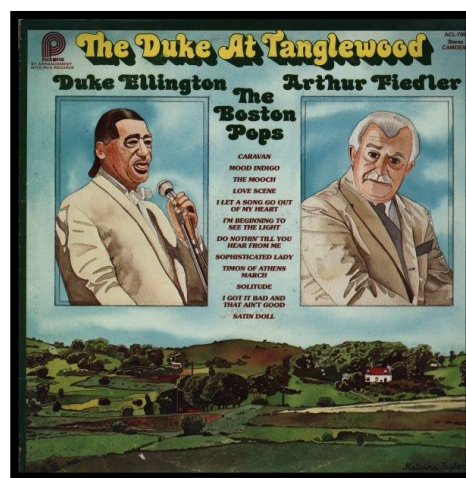
In much the same way that Bartok and Stravinsky had created an urbane harmonic style out of pre-tonal rural melodic material, Ellington had taken rag and jazz and transported it through a portal of Miley, Nanton, Carney, Hodges et al into something distinct and uniquely black. Stravinsky’s *Pribaoutki* and Bartok’s *Improvisations on Peasant Songs* translated the non-classical aspects of peasant music into ‘jarring dissonances’ made up of bitonality, tone clusters, and major and minor thirds. In contrast, Ellington represented the black urban experience and the associated struggle with unique textures, timbres, tonalities and structures that were sophisticated in design and execution and in turn vanguardian, which equated to a music that was above all else ‘modern’.

With works, such as *Creole Love Call*, *Yellow Dog Blues*, and *The Mooche*, Ellington conjured a style of music making that drew on African heritage and forcefully melded it with the contemporary world of cosmopolitan America. In this respect, jazz stands similarly alongside European classical music, for in both forms the modern often appeared as an atavism to the primitive. *The Mooche*, for example, was both simultaneously modern and yet primitive ‘jungle music’. For insofar as the European Modernists sought to bypass bourgeois values and restrictions, Ellington, aided by Carney and Hodges, subverted the racial prejudice

¹¹⁸⁹ Mark Tucker, Duke Ellington, *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 253.

of his era. Through his efforts to remain modern and unique, Ellington transformed the jazz idiom into a means of communication that, through its mystery, majesty, and accomplishment, compelled whites to listen to him and his orchestra on their own terms.

Undoubtedly, Boston was pivotal to this process and to a certain extent, if not in a coherent manner, has since attempted to lay claim to him in a number of ways. In a more general respect, Boston was one of only three cities in which Ellington performed (at Symphony Hall) *Black, Brown, and Beige*, his sweeping tonal history of black America in 1943.¹¹⁹⁰ While in 1947, he received the Esquire gold medal award, from Arthur Fielder (the Boston Pops) as the nation's top popular music composer and arranger.¹¹⁹¹ In 1962, Ellington, alongside Fielder, performed a medley of his most famous compositions to an audience of 18,000 at Tanglewood.¹¹⁹² And during the first half of the 1970s, he presented his *Sacred Concerts* (liturgical works) at area churches, including the Emmanuel Church, part of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.¹¹⁹³



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Figure 6.2: The Duke at Tanglewood with the Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops.

¹¹⁹⁰ A. H. Lawrence, *Duke Ellington and His World* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 279.

¹¹⁹¹ No Author Attributed, 'Vaudeville Reviews: RKO-Boston, Boston'. *Billboard*. January 18, 1947. 35.

¹¹⁹² Life Music Review, 'The Duke Clicks in Squaresville: Ellington at the Philharmonic'. *LIFE*. August 1965. 15.

¹¹⁹³ Robert C Hayden, *Faith, Culture, and Leadership: A History of the Black Church in Boston* (Boston: Boston Branch NAACP, 1983), 81.

¹¹⁹⁴ Duke Ellington, Boston Pops / Arthur Fiedler, 'The Duke At Tanglewood'. Pickwick – ACL-7052. Vinyl. 1977.

Furthermore, in 1966 he received the Paul Revere Plaque, a municipal honour, from the city,¹¹⁹⁵ and in the same year was given the keys to neighbouring Worcester, on their aptly titled ‘*Duke Ellington Day*’.¹¹⁹⁶ Add to this, honorary Doctor of Music degrees from Berkeley (where the study of his work has been part of the curriculum for over fifty years),¹¹⁹⁷ Assumption College,¹¹⁹⁸ and Brown University.¹¹⁹⁹ Duke on occasion reciprocated the affection felt for him in the city by penning homages and ditties to the city itself and some of its players. For example, ‘B Sharp Boston’, often cited as an ode to Sabby Lewis,¹²⁰⁰ was recorded by Duke Ellington in New York on December 22, 1949. Sadly, the song settled into obscurity. It was not released in the U.S. in Ellington’s lifetime but its writing and recording marks a notable connection.¹²⁰¹

¹¹⁹⁵ No Author Attributed, ‘Census: Duke Ellington’. *Jet Magazine*. June 13, 1974. 12-13. Available: <https://guyaneseonline.wordpress.com/2011/04/27/old-jet-magazines-from-1950-onwards>. Accessed: October 1, 2015.

¹¹⁹⁶ Ken Vail, *Duke’s Diary, Part 2* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 380.

¹¹⁹⁷ Jim Fishel, ‘Berklee College: Right on Key in Teaching’, *Billboard*. July 13, 1974. 19. Available: <http://www.billboard.com/magazine-archive>. Accessed: November 2, 2015.

¹¹⁹⁸ Klaus Stratemann, *Duke Ellington, Day by Day and Film by Film* (New York: JazzMedia, 1992), 250.

¹¹⁹⁹ Matthew Whitaker PhD., ed., *Icons of Black America: Breaking Barriers and Crossing Boundaries [3 volumes]: Breaking Barriers and Crossing Boundaries* [Three Volumes] (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 260.

¹²⁰⁰ ‘B Sharp Boston’ might been Duke’s musical reaction to the breakup of the Sabby Lewis’ Orchestra. Sabby was well known in New York, and the breakup would have been big news in the jazz community there. Ellington was Sabby’s friend, and Duke admired his piano playing. And the friendships went up and down the line in both bands—some grew up together in Boston, others worked together in New York, and everybody knew everybody. Troy Street Publishing. On Troy Street: ‘Dec 22, 1949: B Sharp Boston’. Posted: December 22, 2013. Available: <http://troystreet.com/tspots/2013/12/22/dec-22-1949-b-sharp-boston>. Accessed: January 21, 2014.

¹²⁰¹ Ibid.

Conclusion

Boston is and has been for much of its existence a city of distinction. Small in size but ultimately great in influence, it boasts a short but proud history. From iconic figures such as founding father, Samuel Adams to revolutionary links including the Freedom Trail and Bunker Hill, Boston's post-European history of settlement, economic development, and tradition has instilled a sense of identity into the city that infuses not only its core inhabitants but also those in outlying communities such as Medford, North Andover, and even Marlborough. Through a process of drawing the past, allegorically and metaphorically, off its landscapes of memory, and through the absorption of official written narratives and even in certain instances myth-telling, Boston's collective recall has been shaped in such a manner as to cultivate individual belief in its merits and to preserve the legacies of its institutions.

For a city that places great value on the magnitude of its past, however, representations of its twentieth-century black history serve as a paradox. For beyond the legacies of Crispus Attucks, Harriett Tubman, and Phillis Wheatley et al, Boston's black history, notably history that relates to its South End communities and associated individuals are lacking sufficient recognition. In this respect, black Boston lacks both the textual and temporal reference points that allow for collective memorialisation. An obvious downside to this is that limited recognition has impacted on the production of post-abolition black heritage. The production of such heritage, often cultivated through the purposeful recording of the past, is essential in the continued shaping and sustaining of shared identities.

Important to the character of black Boston during the early twentieth century, as this thesis has shown, was the emergence of jazz music. In its formative capacity, jazz served as an essential repository for the curation of many long-preserved black cultural forms: sorrow and slave songs, gospel music, call-and-response chants, sub-Saharan African rhythms and more. Over the course of four centuries, beginning with the arrival of the first slaves to America (principally to the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies), these forms were preserved, refocused, and at times fused with adopted white cultural forms, for example the Charleston

rhythm, and then passed on to future generations.¹²⁰² At the time of its emergence, jazz served as the pinnacle of this process. It was a music that not only imitated, critiqued, and stereotyped the harsh realities of black life but also showcased the enormous value and richness of black culture, if at first not to whites, especially to emerging black generations.

Every city that played a part in this process did so in its own unique way. For example, in Boston, in addition to the more generalised issues of being black in America, notably racial discrimination, residential segregation, labour conflict, and poverty, black jazz musicians also had to overcome limited infrastructure, governmental (state level and national) narrow-mindedness, tenuous links to the Red Scare, and longstanding racial, cultural, and class inferiority defined, in large measure, by the city's Brahmin classes. Insofar as jazz music in many cities nationally, especially New York, was propagated as a fresh concept and the most potent mechanism for the projection of the black voice, the reaction of the cultural, social, and at times political hierarchies in Boston was often consistent with their general reactions to all black cultural forms of expression and voice experienced in the past: they rejected it outright as low-class and lacking in morality and merit.

The best means of understanding this rejection is perhaps through a comparison with the manner in which jazz was received across the Charles River in neighbouring Cambridge and in nearby places such as Salem, Massachusetts. These places were largely untouched by the furore of inner-city, puritan-style social policing, racial prejudice, and Brahmin cultural influence. Furthermore, these places were not ingrained with the principled standards of high culture sensibility. As such, these places, and many more like them in close proximity, can be viewed as the tangible margins beyond the demarcation line of elitist Boston where black musicians, from the city and those who travelled in, could somewhat freely cultivate their take on jazz music.

In short, while Boston, circa 1919 - 1929 lacked the requisite network of record labels, recording studios, booking agents, and viable music venues required to cultivate jazz on a

¹²⁰² Andrew S. Berish, *Lonesome Roads and Streets of Dreams: Place, Mobility, and Race in Jazz of the 1930s and '40s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 13-15.

widespread scale, it did, however, assist many jazz musicians, both homegrown and visiting. Such assistance was principally down to the support and fostering of bandleaders, booking agents, promoters, and general champions of the music in the city. In this respect, one can point to both blacks and whites who supported some jazz players in their opposition to the racial and cultural status quo. These individuals, including Harry 'Bish' Hicks and Charlie Schribman, created the conditions that not only allowed blacks to pass the baton of cultural heritage as they had done so many times before but also on this occasion to be heard, via jazz music, on their own terms.

Arguably, the apex of this process was reached in 1927 when Duke Ellington, and his associates from Boston and nearby Cambridge, Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges, achieved national prominence via New York. Not only did this success mark the moment when jazz began its ascent toward the plateau of America's leading musical form, but it also ushered the music into mainstream focus in Boston. All of a sudden, not only was there a challenge in the city to the dominance of white musical forms (concert and classical music) and white musicians (including Paul Whiteman, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Jerome Kern), but there was also a challenge to the clearly defined cultural hierarchy of distinction that had been set in motion by seventeenth-century Puritanism and maintained thereafter by Brahmin elitism.

The extent of this 'revolution' is evident in 1929, when journalistic, scholarly, and cultural debates about jazz's merits, which had previously focused on the baseness of its origins in Boston – the 'savage crash and bang' of African jungle music - began to give way to a sense of pride and recognition in its cultural value.¹²⁰³ While the negativity attributed to black jazz in the press had resulted in a poor understanding of the whole jazz environment and its musical sense for much of the Jazz Age itself, a contrary shift, spearheaded by the reportage of leading American tabloids – *The New York Times* and mirrored by the *Boston Globe* –

¹²⁰³ Charles Suhor, *Jazz in New Orleans: The Postwar Years Through 1970* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 18-19.

focused on the merits of the music. This newfound affection for and approach to jazz on the East Coast ushered into focus a national media swing. As Luther Williams notes:

In April 1929 the death knell was sounded not for jazz but for the controversy surrounding it in an article in the *Times* recounting the European travels of Sandhor Harmati, director of the Omaha Symphony. He said that jazz...was the only American music known by the European generation of that day. It appeared that jazz had arrived to stay.¹²⁰⁴

This can be considered a monumental moment for black America, and with it, black Boston. For the change in attitude towards jazz ultimately marked a paradigm shift, culturally, whereby not only had the music displaced European concert strains as the leading form globally, but it had also become a respected device that allowed some blacks a voice of their own. While black Boston would not fully reap the benefits of this shift, ironically, until the Jazz Age and with it the glamour, splendour, and lavishness of the era, had ended, it had, however, in its own way, set in motion the wheels of change. Thus, while the tales of Harry 'Bish' Hicks, the emergence of Local 535, the murder of James Reece Europe, and the residencies of Duke Ellington mark an interesting chapter in the early years of jazz history, they also reveal a telling period in black Boston's history that deserves closer and more developed scrutiny and analysis.

For as Gabrielle Brammer asserts, in early evocations of jazz, the improvised lines, and the harmonic complexities of its solos gave rise to a new melodic and rhythmic language. That language ultimately served, over time, to elevate jazz to the position of America's classical music, and Duke Ellington, arguably its most esteemed patron, to the status of national icon. More importantly, however, is that in the midst of the many elements – swing, rhythm, syncopation and so on, of Ellington's early compositional pieces was, without doubt, the most potent aspect of jazz expression (i.e., freedom), the solo – or as he referred to it, 'Boston'.

¹²⁰⁴Charles Suhor, 'Jazz Notes: Press Coverage of Early Jazz –A Tale of Three Cities', *Journal of the Jazz Journalists Association*, December 2004. 2-3. Available online: <http://www.jazzhouse.org/jn>. Accessed: January 4, 2016.

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